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דֶּרֶךְ אֱמוּנָה

THE

WAY OF FAITH;

OR,

THE ABRIDGED BIBLE;

CONTAINING

SELECTIONS FROM ALL THE BOOKS OF HOLY WRIT.

BY

DR. M. BÜDINGER;

TRANSLATED FROM THE FIFTH GERMAN EDITION

BY

DAVID ASHER.

SPECIALLY SANCTIONED BY THE REV. DR. ADLER, CHIEF RABBI OF THE UNITED CONGREGATIONS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

Intended for the use of Jewish Schools and Families.

"Grass withereth, the flower fadeth,
But the word of our God endureth for ever."
ISAIAH xl. 8.

LONDON:
SAMUEL BAGSTER AND SONS,
WAREHOUSE FOR HEBREW AND POLYGLOT BIBLES, LEXICONS, GRAMMARS, CONCORDANCES, AND PSALTERS,
IN ANCIENT AND MODERN LANGUAGES.
15, PATERNOSTER ROW.

Πολλαι μεν θνητοις Γλωτται, μια δ'Αθανατοισιν.

DR. BÜDINGER'S PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EDITION OF THIS WORK.

The connection which exists between the volumes containing the Divine Revelation and the Jewish religion, is as manifold, essential, and decided, as the influence of religion itself is on the higher destiny of man. Hence revealed religion and reason assert an equal authority and an equal right in promoting the spiritual welfare of the Israelite. While reason *seeks*, revelation *shows* him the way to happiness, and enlightens the path with the light of faith. Though the free spirit of inquiry penetrates even into this sanctuary (revelation), removing, with a presumptuous hand, the holy veil from consecrated monuments, for the purpose of bringing to light sterile probabilities, which can at best but imperfectly satisfy the understanding, and leave the heart cold; yet it behoves, and is incumbent on the Israelite, to *believe in the word of God*,[1] as it behoves, and is incumbent on him, as a rational being, to obey the moral law.

These sacred volumes, however, have, for a considerable time, been sealed up as it were to Jewish females, especially to

[1] It is well known that (strictly speaking) the dogmas of the Jewish religion may be reduced to three heads, or principles of faith, whence the rest are derived: they are—1. The belief in God, as the only Creator, Benefactor, and Preserver of all things. 2. The belief in divine revelation: and 3. The belief in divine reward and punishment. Compare on this subject the book "Ikarim," by R. Isaac Albo.

the youthful portion of them. This is owing partly to the difficulty of making them understand the original language of the text, and partly to other circumstances, which cannot here be detailed. But if we consider the important functions which woman exercises in human society, as wife, mother, and (first and best) instructor of her children, and, on the other hand, the decided effect of religion, or rather, of religious training, on this latter calling, and on the obligations with which it is coupled; if we further consider, how much depends on the first education man receives from his mother; what power a pious-minded, religious mother, who is well versed in the Bible, has over the moral disposition and sentiments of her children; and how, on the contrary, a neglected and vicious education, in our earliest infancy, produces the most unhappy results, and how deeply these good or evil consequences affect social life, and whole generations; we certainly must allow a knowledge of the Bible to be as necessary and important to Jewish females, as revelation is to religion itself. This argument acquires still greater force, when we bear in mind, that the life of the Jew, religiously speaking, is entirely interwoven with the Bible. It not only contains the history of the origin of his nation; but, moreover, his religious ceremonies, his private and public worship of God, his festivals and fasts, and his prayers,—all these are founded on, and stand in the closest relation to, Holy Writ, including all the books that are comprised in the term. And do not all the precepts and doctrines of the moral law flow from that salutary source? And are not those doctrines tantamount to divine laws, enjoined on man by revelation? And of all this, the daughters of Israel[1] should be allowed to know but little or

[1] It cannot surely be maintained that the divine law excludes them, for it is therein said (Deut. xxxi. 12), "Gather the people together, men, and women,

nothing, as if, forsooth, they had but little or nothing to do with religion, and had no right to happiness here and hereafter; or should be obliged to continue strangers in the house, to which they legitimately belong? .... But I should be transgressing the limits of a preface, were I to treat, in its full extent, so important a subject, as that of the religious education and training of the female sex of the Israelites. These few preliminary remarks are intended merely to point out what improvement is needed, and in how far it may be carried out. Our immediate object, however, does not require of us that we should furnish the whole of the contents of the divine books; for, in their totality and original language, they should be reserved for the more serious study of the adult, while for the religious culture of the juvenile members of our community, especially of the female portion, a suitable selection from those sacred volumes is sufficient. That such culture will prove the more successful the earlier it is begun, needs scarcely to be mentioned; nor can it be doubted, that a selection such as is here offered will be found a most useful and necessary auxiliary, if it is considered, how the sublime and unaffected narrative of the Bible is so well adapted to the simplicity, innocence, and tenderness of the infant mind. But hitherto we have strongly felt the want of such an auxiliary. And yet, how is it possible religious doctrines should be retained on the minds of the young, and benefit them, when they hardly know the name, and much less the value and the contents, of these sacred volumes, whence all those doctrines are derived? Let faith first be strengthened by the word of God; let the youthful mind first acquire a knowledge of God, and a love for the good, by an

and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn to fear the Lord your God, and strictly to observe the words of this law."

intimate acquaintance with the biblical facts, descriptions, and characters; then only, and not until then, let a systematic instruction in religion succeed, and it shall prove as salutary as a vernal shower upon the young grass. To supply so urgent a want, and to point out to my corcligionists generally, and to my sisters of the house of Jacob particularly, the *way to the faith* of our fathers, were the motives which induced me to undertake this task. That such a work really is an urgent want, will be acknowledged by every one who holds the word of God sacred, and who does not wish to exclude the Jewish females from the pale of religion, in its more limited sense. How far I have succeeded in accomplishing the object I had in view, it is for those to judge who know the difficulties of such a task, and who will, for this reason, treat me with indulgence.

As regards the manner of execution, I have retained the unaffected biblical form, having been convinced by experience, that this is the best, and the most suitable for my purpose. .... The notes, which are partly of a didactic, and partly of an exegetical nature, are intended to illustrate to the adult female reader, the sense of difficult passages, and to facilitate instruction to the teacher. Want of space would not admit of longer and more frequent notes. In the headings of the chapters, I have endeavoured to indicate the religious and moral lessons that may be deduced therefrom. That I may have been too circumstantial in some parts, and too concise in others,—that I should have omitted here, and added there,—is, after all, perhaps, mere matter of opinion; and here I would beg it to be remembered, for what public, and for what portion of the public, the work is more immediately intended. .... In the arrangement of the Proverbs of Solomon, I have not regarded the succession of the chapters, but the contents; and

as to the Psalms, I have selected those which are less familiar to the young, not being contained in the Daily Prayers.

In conclusion, may I be permitted to add a few observations on the use of this book.

To you, my dear sisters in the faith, who are well educated, I have but little to say on this head. I only beg of you *to read it*, and would simply advise you to look upon this short Bible, which contains the word of God, as a prayer-book. A quarter of an hour—for one chapter—may easily be found every day; while on Sabbath, perhaps, two or more chapters might be perused. Your religious feeling, in course of time, probably made *the way to faith* more agreeable to you, and so you have more frequently walked it.[1] And if the mother thus lead the way, the good daughter will certainly not fail to follow her.

For the faithful teacher, whether male or female, a few hints will suffice. Let your pupils read but little at a time, and exhaust that little by repetition and interrogation. The notes and headings will guide you in your task. The Scriptural verses, frequently quoted at the commencement of a new chapter, may be used both as a means to illustrate the purport of the chapter and as moral apothegms in themselves, fit to be committed to memory. Thus, for instance, the quotation (ch. 11), "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," &c. having

[1] It need scarcely to be mentioned, that there is a great difference between edifying or devotional works and every other kind of books. The latter, especially books of mere amusement, if *once* perused, have attained their aim; but with the former the case is quite the contrary. What are they, but means to strengthen the soul in morality and religion,—therefore prayer, or worship of God in a wider sense. That which is most familiar to us is here frequently the most efficacious, the most edifying portion. And looked at from this point of view, the reading of the Bible undoubtedly asserts the first rank in the education of man.

of holy scripture, with all that vigour of heart and mind which the author exerted in teaching it, the great task which he imposed on himself during life would be performed, his object would be accomplished, and the fear of the Lord would preserve the young in the covenant, into which they have been received.

AMALIE BÜDINGER,

Principal of an Educational Establishment for Young Ladies.

CASSEL, *April*, 5607.
1847.

THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

After the elaborate preface of the author, it would be superfluous in me to offer any further explanation on the nature, design, and utility of the volume, which is here presented to the Jewish public; all I have to add to Dr. Büdinger's remarks is, that whatever he has stated relative to the want of such a work among his German coreligionists, applies with much greater force to my English brethren in the faith, who have as yet no version of their own of the sacred scriptures to place in the hands of their children. Having myself been engaged, for a series of years, in the capacity of teacher and manager in some of our national schools in this country, I have more peculiarly felt the absence of a work, which should form an antechamber, as it were, to the sacred and lofty halls of the doctrinal portion of our holy religion, which should prepare the young for the reception of the more abstract truths revealed to us on Sinai, and which, by making the young student acquainted with the great and worthy characters of the Bible, with the leading facts recorded therein, and with some of the sublime effusions of the Prophets and inspired writers, preserved in that Book of books, should gradually lead them *on the way to faith*. Dr. Büdinger's short Bible appeared to me to supply this desideratum; and encouraged by the Reverend the Chief Rabbi, who shortly after his arrival in this country, recommended this book to my attention, I at once undertook the task of translating it, having previously obtained the permission of the respected widow of the author, as testified by the brief, yet masculine and spirited, preface which she kindly forwarded to the Rev. Dr. Adler, for the express purpose of its preceding my translation.

Under such favourable auspices (to use a current phrase), I proceeded to the execution of my task, cheerful and replete

with hope, yet, not without apprehension; for, besides labouring under the disadvantage of writing in a foreign language, I had to contend against difficulties of no ordinary kind. The authorised version is, in this country, the standard translation of the Bible; its phraseology is as familiar to an Englishman as the voice of a dear friend; the least departure from it is offensive, and startles from its novelty; and yet, great as is the merit of this very scrupulous version, it was impossible for me to adopt its renderings in every instance, since I found, that wherever the text presented any difficulty, the translators, perhaps most wisely and judiciously for their purpose, literally adhered to the original.[1] On the other hand, Dr. Büdinger, in his version, has followed the renderings of Mendelssohn, Euchel, Wolfssohn, J. Levi, J. Wolf, Dr. C. W. Justi, and Friedländer; not, however, without regard to his immediate and primary object, and hence occasionally differing from his models in their construction of the text. Thus fettered, having had to consult both the English version and the Hebrew text, I determined, in the narrative portion of the work, to adopt, with but slight deviations, the language of the former, and to retain the spirit of the latter. A greater license, however, was required for the just rendering of the poetical passages which occur throughout the work, and more particularly in the Prophets and the book of Job, not from any arbitrary inclination or novelty-hunting propensity of my own, but because it appeared to me, and indeed it must be admitted by all who are conversant with the Hebrew language and its spirit, that the authorised English version, though even here scrupulously literal, has sometimes mistaken the sense of the text, or from that very close adherence to it left it unintelligible. This observation likewise applies to the Preacher, the Proverbs of Solomon, and the Book of Sirach, where the immediate object of this work frequently required a paraphrase, rather

[1] In some few instances they have even departed from the Masoretic reading of the text.

than a translation; the text being, in many instances, so obscure as to admit of a variety of constructions, nay, even to defy all attempts at a satisfactory elucidation; and, finally, to the Psalms, which present equally numerous and great difficulties. In all those instances, therefore, I deemed it the safest course for me to be guided by my author, and to imitate his arrangement of the verses, without, however, intending them to be metrical; and although I may not have always agreed with him in his interpretation of the text, not much would have been gained by my departure from his translation, since in differences of this nature, in the conflict of opinions of even acknowledged authorities, it is impossible for the ablest, and would have been presumptuous in me, to pronounce the decision.

These few explanatory remarks I have felt it incumbent on me to make, lest I should incur the severity of critics. Yet I would by no means be understood to deprecate criticism altogether; on the contrary, any real improvement that may be suggested will be thankfully received, and treated with due attention in a future edition of the work. This much only I would beg to have borne in mind, by those who shall sit in judgment upon me, that I did not for a moment contemplate producing a standard Jewish version of the Bible,—such a design would have been incompatible with a mere abridgment, —but a useful class-book, comprising select portions from the Scriptures, and pointing out to the young the beauties and the holiness of that Book of books. With regard to the notes, I frequently, in the course of writing, felt an inclination to enlarge them; on a more mature consideration, however, it appeared to me unadvisable to make such an addition, as the teacher ought to have an opportunity left him of making his own comments on the chapter read by his pupils, and of orally conveying to them the moral lessons to be deduced therefrom, the living voice possessing so superior a power to, and being so much better calculated than, any other medium, for impressing on the mind that which is intended to be inculcated.

Before concluding I must not omit to state, that, in the Book of Genesis, I took the liberty of following, in most instances, the translation published some time ago by the Revds. D. A. De Sola, I. L. Lindenthal, and Dr. M. J. Raphall, who had endeavoured in their performance, to combine correctness with taste.[1]

I also take this opportunity of gratefully acknowledging the valuable contributions of Messrs. Sampson Samuel, and M. Angel, Head-Master of the Jews' Free School; the former of whom kindly furnished me with a metrical translation of the 15th and 84th Psalms, and the latter with that of the 1st, 8th, and 139th Psalms.

With these prefatory remarks I send this volume forth to the world; and although I only appear before the public in the capacity of translator, I believe I have stated sufficient to convince the reader that my task was not one of the easiest; and, tremblingly alive as I am to my own deficiencies, I should certainly have shrunk from performing it, had I not been upheld by the consciousness, that though I might fail in doing entire justice to this divine book, its contents may be outwardly disfigured, but can never be stripped of their intrinsic beauty and sublimity. May I, therefore, in conclusion, express the hope, that my coreligionists, appreciating my humble intention of serving them, and evincing their sense of the Chief Rabbi's zeal in the cause of education, will accord this book a favourable reception; and that parents, and mothers especially, will lend their powerful aid in instilling into the minds of their children those excellent lessons of piety and morality which are here afforded to them, and which alone can render them happy here below, and ensure their felicity in the life to come.

London, *Tebeth*, 5608.

[1] This translation is on sale by the publishers of this work.

CONCISE CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

PRINCIPAL PERSONS AND EVENTS MENTIONED.

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The Death of Adam	930
Noah and the Deluge	1655
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This work not being intended for a history of the Jews, the chronological table here given will be sufficient for immediate purposes. The dates adopted are those of Rabbi David Ganz, in his Chronological Manual, and differ, as is well known, from those generally accepted; this circumstance, however, is of little importance to the object here in view.

THE WAY OF FAITH.

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES. (GENESIS.)

סֵפֶר בְּרֵאשִׁית

I. THE CREATION.

THE POWER AND WISDOM OF GOD.

"Ah, Lord God! behold thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and out-stretched arm, and nothing is too hard for thee." Jer. xxxii. 17.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and every thing contained therein, in six days. But the earth was without form, and a confused mass, and all was darkness. Then God said, Let light be: and light was. And God divided the light from the darkness; he called the light, Day, and the darkness he called Night. Then God made the expanse of heaven, and gathered together the waters under the heaven, so that they became sea, and the dry land was separated therefrom. God bade the earth bring forth all kinds of herbs and trees. In the expanse of heaven he placed the two great lights and the stars, to divide the day from the night, the light from the darkness, and to give light upon the earth; and that they might also be for signs and for seasons, for days and for years. God then bade the waters teem with all kinds of animated creatures, and created the fowl to fly under the heaven. He also bade the earth bring forth cattle and the various beasts of the land, each after its kind. And on the sixth day God created man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.[1]

[1] The immortality of the human soul.

Thus the Lord created man and woman—Adam and Eve[1]—in his own image, and after his likeness.[2] And the Lord God blessed them, and said unto them: Bear rule over the whole earth, and over every thing upon it, over all animals and herbs, as well as over the fish of the sea.[3] And God saw all that he had made, and behold, it was very good. Then God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made, blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.[4]

II. THE FALL OF MAN.

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Prov. i. 10.

THE Lord God planted a garden in Eden, eastward, and there he placed Adam and his wife Eve, to cultivate and to guard it. And the Lord God had caused to grow out of the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. In the midst of the garden were the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And God commanded Adam, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat; for on the day thou eatest thereof, thou must assuredly die.

But the serpent which was more subtle than any other beast of the field which the Lord had made, beguiled the woman so that she took of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and did eat thereof; she also gave to her husband, and he did eat. They now heard the voice of God in the garden, and Adam and his wife hid themselves amongst the trees of the garden from the presence of the Lord. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? He said, I heard thy voice in the garden, I was afraid, and hid myself.[5] Then God

[1] Adam signifies earth, and Eve (Chava) having life; i. e. mother of all living (human) beings.

[2] The high dignity of man. He is created in the image of God; that is, God has endowed him with reason and an immortal soul, and has bestowed on him the disposition and capacity for that moral perfection by which he can attain felicity, and resemble his divine Creator.

[3] The especial favour of the Creator in preferring man to the rest of his creatures, and granting him dominion over them.

[4] The peculiar dignity and sanctity of the Sabbath.

[5] Adam had committed a sin, and his conscience reproaching him with it, he was ashamed and afraid of the voice of God, and tried to hide himself from God, who knows and sees all things.

said, Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou shouldest not eat? And Adam replied, The woman whom thou hast given me, gave me of the tree, and I did eat. Then said the Lord God to the woman, What is it that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. The Lord then said to the serpent, Because thou hast done this, be thou cursed above all animals; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy progeny and her progeny; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise its heel. To the woman he said, Thou shalt suffer much pain, and thy husband shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, therefore the earth shall henceforth bring forth to thee thorns and thistles, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou returnest unto the ground, out of which thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. So the Lord drove Adam and his wife out of the garden of Eden, that they might till the ground; and at the east of the garden he placed the cherubim, and the flaming sword which revolveth to guard the way to the tree of life.[1]

III. CAIN AND ABEL. SETH. DEATH OF ADAM.

Liberality and joy dwell in the kind heart, jealousy and dissatisfaction in the bad. How pernicious is envy!

Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain, the elder, who was a tiller of the ground, brought of the fruit thereof an offering to the Lord. And Abel, who was a keeper of sheep, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof, a sacrifice to the Lord. The Lord had regard unto Abel and unto his offering, but unto Cain and his offering he had not regard.[2] At this Cain was much grieved, and his

[1] The wise Creator drove the first human beings out of paradise, and made them cultivate the ground; because it had been shown, that an idle life was not good for them, as it had seduced them to sin. Thus, Divine Providence, even in punishing, aims at the salvation of man.

[2] Because Abel brought his offering from motives of gratitude, and as a pious and voluntary acknowledgment of the goodness and the favours of the invisible Creator and Preserver; while Cain, on the contrary, brought his inferior offering

countenance was cast down. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou grieved, and why is thy countenance cast down? If thou doest well, canst thou not raise it? but if thou doest not well, sin couches (as it were) at the door; unto thee is its desire, yet thou canst rule over it. And when Cain was in the field with Abel, he rose up against his brother, and slew him. Thereupon the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? He said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?[1] The Lord said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now be thou cursed from the ground which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground it shall no more yield unto thee its strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be on the earth.[2] Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is too great to be borne. Behold, thou hast driven me from the face of the land, and from thy presence I must hide myself; if now I am a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, it will come to pass, that whosoever findeth me will slay me. Then the Lord appointed a sign unto Cain, lest any one finding him should kill him. And Cain went away from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden. One of his descendants was called Lamech; he had three sons, viz. Jabal, who was the father (or first) of such as dwell in tents and rear cattle; Jubal, who was the father of all such as handle the harp and pipes; and Tubal Cain, the first that wrought tools of copper and iron. Adam had a third son, called Seth, and several more sons and daughters. Adam died, being 930 years old; but Methuselah attained a higher age than any other man of that period, for he lived 969 years.[3]

with reluctance, and as if by compulsion. Here, as in the discharge of every religious duty, it is not the act only, but also the spirit which actuates us in the performance thereof, that gives it a value in the eyes of God. "For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." 1 Sa. xvi. 7. "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination, for he bringeth it with a wicked mind." Prov. xxi. 27.

[1] Stubbornness and a bold-faced denial are the usual consequences of a bad deed. One vice ever leads to another.

[2] Constant agitation, caused by remorse, is the heaviest punishment of the sinner.

[3] The all-wise Creator, in his kindness to man, permitted the first generations to attain so high an age, in order that they should gain much experience, and make useful inventions for the benefit and instruction of posterity.

IV. NOAH. THE DELUGE.

"A calamity ariseth, and the wicked are no more; but the house of the righteous shall stand." Prov. xii. 7.

God saw man that he was corrupt, and that every device of his heart was only evil continually. Unto Lamech a son was born, whom he called Noah (i. e. the comforter); for, said he, this one shall comfort us for our labour, and the weariness of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed. And Noah found favour in the eyes of the Lord; for Noah was a sincerely pious man, and walked with God. And God said unto him, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them, therefore will I destroy all living beings from the earth. Make thee an ark, three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits broad, and thirty cubits high. And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, thy wife, thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Of every clean beast, as well as of all clean fowl, thou shalt take to thee seven pairs of each species; but of beasts and fowl that are not clean, only two pairs. Also, of all kinds of reptiles, two shall come in with thee, to keep them alive. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, that it be as sustenance for thee and for them. For, seven days hence, I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will destroy every being that I have made from off the face of the earth. Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him. And he went with his wife and three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their three wives, into the ark, because of the waters of the deluge. It was in the six hundredth year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month, that the waters of the deluge came down upon the earth. The rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and the waters rose so high as to cover all the mountains that are under the heaven. Then perished every living being, both man and beast, every reptile, and bird of the air; all was extirpated from the earth; Noah alone remained, and what was with him in the ark. Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing that was with him in the ark; and he caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. And in the twelfth month from the commencement of the flood, Noah sent forth a dove, to see if

the waters were decreased from off the surface of the ground, but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were still on the surface of the whole earth. He put forth his hand, took her, and brought her back unto him into the ark. He then waited seven days more, and again sent forth the dove out of the ark. When the dove came back at even-tide, she had an olive-leaf in her mouth; then Noah knew that the waters were diminished. He now removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold the surface of the ground was dry. And Noah went forth out of the ark, with all that were with him; took of the clean beast and of the clean fowl, and offered them as burnt-offerings on an altar, in honour of the Lord.[1] The Lord graciously accepted the offering, blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. Whatever moveth upon the earth, and all the fish of the sea, are delivered into your hand. Nevertheless, flesh with the life thereof, which is its blood, you shall not eat. And surely your own blood will I require, of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; yea, at the hand of every man will I require the life of man his brother. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man.[2] And the Lord spoke further and said, I have set my bow in the cloud, as a sign of the everlasting covenant between me and you, and every living creature on the earth, that the waters shall no more become a deluge to destroy all flesh. Henceforth, while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall no more be interrupted.

V. INTEMPERANCE.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink an agitator, and whosoever indulgeth in them cannot become wise." Prov. xx. 1.

Noah cultivated the ground, and was the first that planted a vineyard. He drank of the wine, and became drunk, and exposed himself within his tent.[3] Ham, the father of Canaan,

[1] Gratitude towards their all-bountiful heavenly Preserver was the first sentiment with which the saved family, on their quitting the ark, greeted the earth in adoring joy; and a thanksgiving was their first work.

[2] The first religious commandments of the human race.

[3] The evil consequences of drunkenness.

saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren outside. Then, Shem and Japheth, took the garment, laid it upon their shoulders, went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; but their faces were averted, so that they could not see their father's nakedness.[1] When Noah had awoke from his wine, and learned what his younger son had done unto him, he said, Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Moreover he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan be a servant unto him. May God enlarge Japheth, so that he abide in the tents of Shem, and Canaan be a servant unto them both. Noah lived after the flood 350 years, and died, being 950 years of age.

VI. THE BUILDING OF THE TOWER.

"There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." Prov. xix. 21.

THE descendants of the sons of Noah were numerous, and were divided into various families and nations. (At that period the whole earth was of one language and of one speech.) When they journeyed eastward, they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and settled there. Then said they one to another, Come, let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make ourselves a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.[2] This project however displeased the Lord, who therefore confounded their language, that they could not understand one another's speech.[3] So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city and the tower. Therefore was the name of the city called Babel, (i. e. confusion), because the Lord did there confound their language, and from thence did he scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

[1] Only bad, degenerate children, delight in the faults of their parents; good and pious children, endeavour to cover them. The former share the curse of Ham; the latter, the blessing of Shem and Japheth.

[2] The expression, "let us make ourselves a name," is very arrogant, and evinces a haughty disposition. Hence, punishment soon followed. Man should never boast of a work which he has not yet, or only just begun, as he cannot tell, whether the Lord will permit him to complete it. If it prove a failure, the disappointment will be the more mortifying. Modest and rational activity is of itself sufficient to acquire for us a good name, without our previously bestowing a thought upon it, or giving utterance to such intention.

[3] The origin of the different languages.

VII. ABRAHAM. BY HIS INSTRUCTIONS HE SPREADS THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ONE GOD.

CONFIDENCE IN THE PROTECTION OF GOD IN A FOREIGN LAND. PEACEABLE DISPOSITION.

THE following are the generations of Terah, who was a descendant of Shem.[1] Terah begat Abraham, Nahor, and Haran, and Haran begat Lot. But the Lord had said to Abraham, Depart from the land of thy birth, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation,[2] I will bless thee and make thy name great. So Abraham departed from Ur-Casdim as the Lord had spoken unto him, together with his wife Sarah, his brother's son Lot, and with all the substance which they had gathered, as well as the souls they had acquired, to go to the land of Canaan; and they arrived in the land of Canaan. Abraham was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. He pitched his tents east of Beth-El; he there built an altar unto the Lord, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. But Abraham was very wealthy in cattle, in silver, and in gold; he also had many men servants and maid servants, she asses and camels. And when he returned from Egypt, whither the Lord had commanded him to go because of the famine in the land of Canaan, a strife arose between the herdmen of Abraham's cattle and those of Lot's cattle. For Lot also, who went with Abraham, had flocks, and herds, and tents. Therefore the land could not support their dwelling together. Then Abraham said unto Lot: Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, between my herdmen and thy herdmen: for we are kinsmen. Pray separate from me: wilt thou go to the left, then will I proceed to the right; but if thou wilt go to the right hand, then will I remove to the left. Hereupon they separated one from the other. Abraham dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan, which was very fertile, and pitched his tent unto Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked and exceedingly sinful before the Lord. But the Lord had spoken unto Abraham after Lot had separated from him, saying: Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, eastward

[1] The Noachite aboriginal tribes spread upon the earth,—Shem settling in Asia, Ham in Africa, and Japheth in Europe. Mizraim and Canaan were sons of Ham.

[2] Abraham in Hebrew implies: The father of many nations.

and westward. For the whole country which thou seest to thee will I give it, and to thy descendants for ever. And I will make thy posterity numerous as the dust of the earth, so that if any one can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, traverse the land, in the length and in the breadth thereof; for unto thee will I give it. Then Abraham pitched his tent in the grove of Mamre which is in Hebron, and built there an altar in honour of the Lord.

VIII. THE HISTORY OF ABRAHAM CONTINUED.

THE LOVE OF MANKIND.

"Stand not aloof when thy neighbour is in danger." Levit. xix. 16. Disinterestedness. Hospitality. The comfort of the good is God.

About the same period there arose between the kings of several countries and cities a war, in which Lot was taken prisoner. And when Abraham heard of this, he armed his trained servants, three hundred and eighteen in number, pursued the kings at night, and defeated them. And he brought back all the captured property, also Lot and his property, and the women likewise, and the people. And Malchi-Zedek, king of Salem, ordered bread and wine to be brought. He was a minister of the Most High God. And he blessed Abraham, and said: Blessed be Abraham of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth. The king of Sodom said unto Abraham: Give me the restored persons, and take the goods to thyself. But Abraham said to the king of Sodom: I swear by the High God, that I will not take from a thread to a shoe latchet; that I will not take aught that is thine.[1] The men, however, who went with me, may take their share.

Soon after these occurrences the word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision, saying: Fear not, Abraham! I am a shield unto thee, thy reward shall be exceedingly great. Then Abraham said: Lord God, what wilt thou give me? Lo, I go childless, and the steward of my house is Eliezer of Damascus. And Abraham said further: Behold, to me thou hast not granted issue, therefore shall the inmate of my house be mine heir. But the word of the Lord came unto him, saying: This shall not be thine heir, but one that shall proceed from thee shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth

[1] Disinterested philanthropy of Abraham.

outside, and said: Look now towards heaven, and count the stars if thou be able to number them;—and he said unto him: So shall thy posterity be. Abraham believed in the Lord, who accounted it to him as righteousness.

When Abraham was ninety and nine years old, the Lord appeared unto him, and said to him: Walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will appoint my covenant between me and thee, and thy descendants after thee, throughout their generations. And my covenant shall be marked on your flesh, as the token of an everlasting covenant.[1] And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. Then Abraham fell on his face before the Lord. And on behalf of his son Ishmael (whom the Egyptian woman Hagar had born unto him) he prayed to the Lord and said: O that Ishmael might live before thee and be acceptable in thy sight.[2]

One day, as Abraham sat at the entrance of his tent in the grove of Mamre, he beheld three men standing near him. He ran to meet them, and prostrated himself towards the ground. And said: If I have found favour in your eyes, pass not away, I pray you, from your servant. Permit that a little water be fetched, wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. They replied: So do, as thou hast said. Then Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said: Quickly bring from the finest flour, and make cakes of it. He then ordered the young man to prepare a tender calf, and set it before them, together with butter and milk; and he stood near them under the tree while they did eat. And one of them said: I will return unto thee about this time next year, when Sarah thy wife shall have a son. Sarah heard this at the entrance of the tent, and laughed within herself, saying: After I am worn with age, shall I indeed bear a child! But he said: Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, and Sarah shall have a son. The men now arose from there, and turned towards Sodom, Abraham going with them to conduct them. But the Lord said: Shall I conceal from Abraham that which I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and

[1] The covenant of circumcision.

[2] That is, that he might be virtuous and happy. The most ardent wish of parents is the well being and happiness of their children.

that all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have chosen him as my friend, knowing that he will command his children and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, to practise equity and justice, so that the Lord bring upon Abraham that which he hath promised concerning him. And the Lord said further: The cry against Sodom and Gomorrah is very great, and their sin is very grievous. When Abraham perceived that the Lord was about to destroy them, he entreated for them, and said: Lord, Judge of the whole earth! wilt thou slay the righteous with the wicked? Perhaps there are fifty righteous among them; wilt thou not rather spare the whole place for the sake of the righteous? Shall the righteous perish with the wicked? And the Lord said: I will forgive the whole place if I find there fifty righteous. And Abraham continued and said: Behold, I have taken upon myself to speak unto the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes; perhaps there should lack five of the fifty, wilt thou, for the want of five, destroy all the city? The Lord said: I will not destroy it, if I find there forty and five. Abraham again said: O let not the Lord be angry, that I do yet speak: perhaps there may be found there thirty, or twenty, or ten righteous. And the Lord replied: I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten. Hereupon Abraham returned unto his place.[1]

IX. THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM. LOT'S DELIVERANCE.

"The Lord hath appointed the destiny of every being; yea, even that of the wicked in the day of evil." Prov. xvi. 4.

Two of the angels[2] came to Sodom at even. When Lot saw them he went to meet them, and bowed his face towards the ground. And said: Behold now, my lords! turn aside, I pray you, into the house of your servant, tarry all night, and to-morrow you can proceed on your journey. But they said: Nay, for we will pass the night in the street. But as he urged them greatly, they entered his house; he then prepared a meal for them, baked unleavened cakes, and they did eat. They had, however, scarcely lain down, when the men of Sodom, both old and young, came from every quarter of the city to

[1] The truly religious man has pity on the erring sinner, he prays for him, and endeavours to save him.

[2] Of the three who had been with Abraham.

surround the house. And they said unto Lot: Where are the men who came to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. Then Lot went out to them and said: I pray you, my brethren, do not act wickedly! Leave these men in peace, since they have come under the shadow of my roof. But they said: Stand back! And they continued and said: This one came here to sojourn, and will already be a judge! Now will we deal worse with thee than with them. And they stepped nearer, to break the door. But the men within put forth their hand, and brought Lot back to them into the house. And the men that were at the door, they smote with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves to find the door.[1] But unto Lot they said: Bring out of this place all that belongeth to thee, for we will destroy this place, because the cry against it hath become so great before the Lord, that the Lord hath sent us to destroy it. Lot now went out and spoke to his sons in law, who had married his daughters, and said: Arise! get out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed to his sons in law as one jesting. And when the morning dawn arose, the angels hurried Lot, saying: Arise! take thy wife and thy two daughters, who are here, lest thou perish in the iniquity of the city. And when he still lingered, the men laid hold of his hands, of the hand of his wife, and of the hand of his two daughters (the Lord being merciful unto them), and conducted them without the city. And they said unto Lot: Escape for thy life; tarry not in all the plain, and look not behind thee; escape to the mountain, lest thou be swept away. Then Lot said unto them: Behold now, thou hast shown me thy great mercy in saving my life; yet, I cannot so quickly escape to the mountain, the evil might therefore overtake me, and I die. Behold! this city is near to flee unto; O let me escape thither, it is but small! (Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar, meaning small.) Permit me to escape thither, that I may live. And he said: See, I will even grant thee this, I will not overthrow the city of which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither! When the sun had risen upon the earth,

[1] The men of Sodom intended to ill use the supposed strangers! This is a proof of their bad disposition, and of their sinful practices. He who offends the stranger who seeks protection and shelter at the hands of his fellow men, instead of rendering him affectionate assistance, evinces a bad heart and a wicked disposition, and makes himself hated by God and men.

Lot arrived at Zoar. Then the Lord caused it to rain upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire down from heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and the whole plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and the growth of the ground. When Lot's wife looked back behind him, she became a pillar of salt. So, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities, among which Lot had dwelt.

X. THE BIRTH OF ISAAC. HAGAR. ISHMAEL.

THE ALL-MERCIFUL PROTECTS THE SUFFERER, AND UNEXPECTEDLY SENDS HIM SUCCOUR AND DELIVERANCE.

THE Lord visited Sarah as he had said. And she bare Abraham a son, in his old age, at the time which God had appointed. Abraham called the name of the son, whom Sarah had born to him, Isaac. Abraham was a hundred years old, and Sarah ninety, when Isaac was born. Sarah said: A laughter[1] has God made me! all that hear it will laugh at me, for I have born a son unto Abraham in his old age. When Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as the Lord had commanded him. The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day Isaac was weaned.

But Ishmael, the son of the Egyptian woman Hagar, derided Isaac and mocked him. Then Sarah said to Abraham: Send this bondwoman away with her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not inherit with my son, with Isaac. This thing displeased Abraham, on account of his son. But God said to Abraham: be not displeased on account of the lad, and of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah shall say unto thee hearken to her voice; for in Isaac only shall thy seed be denominated. But I will also make of Ishmael a nation, because he is thy son. The following morning Abraham took provisions and a skin bottle of water, put them on the shoulder of Hagar, and sent her away with the child.[2] She departed and went astray

[1] The proper signification of the word Yitschak (Isaac).

[2] Thus had the Lord commanded him to do, else he would not have acted with such apparent harshness towards Hagar. But his domestic peace was to be restored, and at the same time, after being miraculously saved in the desert, Ishmael was to be the founder of a distinct tribe in Arabia, which, in process of time, branched out into numerous divisions. So, to this day most of the Bedouins (Nomadic Arabs) call Abraham and Ishmael their ancestors.

in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. And when the water in the skin bottle was spent, she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went and sat down over against him, at the distance of a bow shot, for she said: I will not see the death of the child. She therefore sat at a distance; raised her voice, and wept. God heard the voice of the lad; and an angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said unto her: What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad. Arise, raise up the lad, and clasp him in thy arms, for I will make a great nation of him. Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; she went thither, filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad to drink. And God was with the lad, and he grew; he dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took him a wife from the land of Egypt.

XI. ABRAHAM'S UNBOUNDED LOVE OF GOD.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Deut. vi. 5.

It happened soon after these things, that God tried Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham! And he said, Behold, here am I. Then God said: Take thine only son, whom thou lovest, that is Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and bring him there for a burnt-offering, upon one of the mountains, which I will tell thee. Abraham rose up early in the morning, saddled his ass, took two of his young men and his son Isaac with him, cleft wood for the offering, and went toward the place which God had pointed out to him. On the third day he saw the place afar off. Then Abraham said unto his young men, Stay ye here with the ass; but I and this lad will go yonder, there to worship, and then to return to you. Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, laid it upon his son Isaac, took in his hand the fire and the knife, and thus they went both of them together. And Isaac said, My father! here is the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering? Abraham replied: God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son! Thus they went on together. When they had arrived at the place which God had told him, Abraham built an altar, arranged the wood, bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. Abraham

then stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. But an angel of the Lord called unto him from heaven, and said, Abraham! Abraham! He said, Here am I. And he said, Stretch not forth thy hand against the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know[1] that thou fearest God, since thou hast not withheld thy son from me. And an angel of the Lord called from heaven the second time, and said: By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld from me thine only son, that I will bless thee, and multiply thy posterity, as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is on the sea shore, so that they shall possess the gate of their enemies, and all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves with them, because thou didst hearken to my voice. And Abraham raised his eyes and beheld a ram entangled in a thicket by his horns:[2] then Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt-offering instead of his son. Abraham now returned to his young men, they arose, and went together to Beer-sheba, and Abraham settled at Beer-sheba.

XII. THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF SARAH.

"There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to rejoice." Eccle. iii. 4.

When Sarah was one hundred and twenty-seven years old, she died in Hebron, in the land of Canaan; and Abraham came to mourn for her, and to weep for her. He arose from before his dead, and went to Ephron, who dwelt amongst the children of Heth, to purchase of him a field, for a burying-place possession.[3] And Abraham bought of Ephron the cave

[1] God is omniscient, and had therefore surely known it previously; but by this trial he wished to make manifest Abraham's indomitable piety, and to assure him of his eternal reward.

[2] Perhaps by this predestined occurrence—which to Abraham seemed an accident—the Lord intended to show that he rejects and abhors human sacrifices. Abraham perceived the ram as it were by chance; and behold! it served him for an offering and for an important lesson. Thus it is that an all-wise Providence knows how to regulate things. There are many occurrences in life, looked upon by men as mere accidents; in the sequel, however, it becomes evident, that they were brought about for definite ends. "For the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are ordained." 1 Sam. ii. 3.

[3] The children of Heth, indeed, offered to give him a burying-place gratuitously, but this he nobly refused. "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts liveth happy." Prov. xv. 27.

of Machpelah, together with the field which was before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, for four hundred shekels of silver. After this Abraham buried Sarah, his wife, in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, that is Hebron, in the land of Canaan. And thus was the field and the cave therein made sure unto Abraham for a burying-place possession.

XIII. ISAAC'S MARRIAGE.

"House and riches are inherited from parents, but a prudent (i. e. a virtuous) wife is a gift from the Lord." Prov. xix. 14.

Abraham was now advanced in days, and the Lord had blessed him in all things. And he said unto his servant, who ruled over all that he had, I adjure thee by the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, that thou do not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites amongst whom I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my country, and to my birthplace, and take a wife unto my son Isaac. The servant then said unto him, Perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me unto this land, must I then bring thy son back unto the land whence thou camest? But Abraham said unto him, Beware, that thou bring not my son thither again. The Lord who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my birth, and who sware to me, saying, To thy seed will I give this land, he will send his angel before thee, so that thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence: but if the woman should not be willing to follow thee, then shalt thou be clear from this my oath, only bring not my son thither again. And the servant swore to him concerning that matter. He then took ten of the camels of his master, and of all his goods, arose and went to Aram Naharaim (Mesopotamia), unto the city of Nahor. And the camels he made to kneel down without the city, by a well of water, at eventide, at the time of the maidens going out to draw water, and said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, grant me a happy meeting this day, and show kindness to my master. Behold, I stand here by a well of water, and the daughters of the inhabitants of the city are coming out to draw water. If it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Incline, I pray thee, thy pitcher, that I may drink, shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also, her thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and by her

I shall know that thou hast shown kindness to my master.[1] He had scarcely done speaking, when Rebeka came out (she was a daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, who was the wife of Abraham's brother, Nahor), with her pitcher upon her shoulder. The damsel was of fair appearance and was unmarried. She went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me sip, I pray thee, a little water out of thy pitcher. She said, Drink, my lord; and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and let him drink. When she had given him sufficient, she said, I will also draw for thy camels, until they shall have drank enough. She then hasted, emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran again unto the well, and drew for all his camels. When the camels had done drinking, the man took a golden nose-ring and two golden bracelets, and said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray, is there in thy father's house room for us to pass the night? She replied, I am a daughter of Bethuel, whom Milcah bare unto Nahor; and she added, We have both straw and provender in abundance, also room to pass the night in. He now gave her the nose-ring and the bracelets. The man then bowed down his head, prostrated himself to the Lord, and said, Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who has not withdrawn his mercy and his truth from my master, having led me in the right way to the house of my master's kinsman. The damsel ran, and told this occurrence in her mother's house. Laban, Rebeka's brother, ran out to the man at the well, and said, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord! I have prepared the house, and also a place for the camels. Then the man came into the house; the camels were ungirded, straw and provender were given to them; and to the man they gave water to wash his feet, and the feet of the men that were with him. And food was set before him to eat; but he said, I will not eat until I have told my errand. Then he

[1] A kind and obliging behaviour towards travellers, as well as hospitality generally, was at that time esteemed a particular virtue, for which the nobler and superior families of the pastoral tribes were distinguished, so that the pious and faithful servant, accustomed, from what he had seen at his master Abraham's, to such patriarchal virtue, could justly hope to discover, by such a sign, the better and more well-bred maid of the family of Abraham, and deem her worthy of his master's son. And, in some respects, things continue so to this day; at least, a proper and obliging behaviour speaks greatly in favour of a superior education and mental culture.

(Laban) said, Speak. And he said, I am the servant of Abraham, the Lord hath blessed my master abundantly, so that he hath become great; he gave him flocks and herds, silver and gold, bondmen and bondwomen, camels and asses. Sarah, also, my master's wife, bare a son to my master, when she was old; and to him hath he given all that he hath. Now my master adjured me, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, to take a wife for my son. I came this day unto the well, and said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, if thou wouldst but prosper my way on which I go, behold, I stand here by the well; if now it come to pass, that the maiden who cometh forth to draw water, and to whom I shall say, Pray let me drink a little water from thy pitcher; and she shall say to me, Drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels, let her be the woman whom the Lord hath appointed for my master's son. I had not yet ceased to speak within myself, when lo! Rebeka came forth, with her pitcher on her shoulder. And having said to her, Let me drink a little, I pray thee, she gave me to drink, and drew for my camels also. Then I bowed down, and worshipped the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me the right way to take the daughter of my master's brother for his son. And now, if you will act kindly and truly towards my master, tell me; and if not, do but tell me; that I may turn to the right hand or to the left. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said: The thing hath proceeded from the Lord; we cannot speak to thee in this matter, either bad or good. Here is Rebeka, take her, and depart, and let her be the wife of thy master's son, as the Lord hath spoken. When Abraham's servant had heard their words, he prostrated himself to the earth, to worship the Lord. And he brought forth jewels of silver, and of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebeka; and to her brother and to her mother he gave other precious things. They then did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night. When they arose in the morning, he said, Send me away unto my master. Then her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a year, or ten months; after that she may go. But he said unto them, Delay me not, since God hath prospered my way. They said, We will call the damsel, and ask her herself They called

Rebeka, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? She said, I will go. Thereupon they blessed Rebeka, and said unto her, Our sister! be thou the mother of thousands and myriads, and may thy seed possess the gate of their enemies. Rebeka then arose, and with her maids followed the man on his way. Now Isaac happened to be walking in the field towards evening, when they came in the neighbourhood of his dwelling. And Rebeka said to the servant, What man is this who walketh in the field to meet us? The servant said, It is my master. And she took a veil, and covered herself. The servant then told Isaac all the things that had happened. And Isaac brought Rebeka into the tent of his mother Sarah, and she became his wife: Isaac loved her, and she was to him a consolation after his mother's death.

XIV. DEATH OF ABRAHAM. CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF ISAAC. JACOB AND ESAU.

"The just man, who walketh in his integrity, leaveth a blessing to his children after him." Prov. xx. 7.

THE years of Abraham's life which he lived were one hundred and seventy-five. And Abraham died at this advanced age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people. His sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field which Abraham had purchased of Ephron, and where his wife Sarah was also buried.

Isaac walked in the ways of his father, and the Lord loved him and blessed him. And Rebeka bore him twin sons; the elder was called Esau, and the younger Jacob. As the boys grew up, Esau became a cunning hunter, and was much out in the field; but Jacob was a pious man, abiding in tents.[1] Isaac loved Esau, because he provided venison for him; but Rebeka loved Jacob.

And Isaac dwelt in Gerar, in the land of the Philistines. The Lord was with Isaac; he advanced, and went on increasing, until he grew very great. He had flocks and herds, and many domestics. And Isaac removed from Gerar to Beer-sheba. There the Lord appeared unto him one night, and told him, I am the God of Abraham, thy father; fear not, for I am with

[1] "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work shall be pure and straightforward." Prov. xx. 11.

thee; I will bless thee, and multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake. Isaac there built an altar, proclaimed the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent; and there also his servants dug a well. And Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, came to Isaac, together with several of his companions, and Phichol, the chief of his host, to contract an alliance with him. Isaac made them a feast, and they stayed with him over the night. In the morning they swore one to another; Isaac then conducted them, and they departed from him in peace.

Now Esau hated Jacob, because of the blessing which he had obtained of his father Isaac: for one day, when Isaac had sent Esau out, to hunt some venison for him, and to prepare him a savoury dish of it, in order afterwards to receive the blessing of his aged father before his death, Rebeka dressed two kids of the goats, ordered Jacob, her favourite son, to put on Esau's garments, and to bring the dish to his father, under pretence of his being Esau with the venison. Isaac being old, and his eyes having become dim, so that he could no longer see well, partook of the dish, and blessed Jacob instead of Esau, saying,

The Lord give thee of the dew of heaven,
And of the fatness of the earth,
With plenty of corn and wine:
People shall serve thee,
And nations bow down to thee:
Be lord over thy brethren,
Thy mother's sons shall bow to thee:
Cursed be they who curse thee,
And blessed they who bless thee.

When Esau returned from the chase, and heard how he had been outwitted, he was bitterly grieved, and his anger was kindled against Jacob, so that he was heard to say, The days of mourning for my father are at hand,—then will I slay my brother Jacob.[1] When Rebeka was told this, she said to Jacob, Behold, thy brother Esau purposeth killing thee: therefore, my son, obey my voice; arise, and flee to my brother Laban, to Haran; tarry with him for some time, until thy brother's fury subside; then will I send, and fetch thee from thence. Isaac also called Jacob, blessed him, charged him, and said, Do not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan:

[1] Rude and wrathful though Esau was, yet was he not wanting in due respect for his father.

arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel, the father of thy mother, and take thee a wife from thence, of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and multiply thee, that thou mayest increase and become an assemblage of people. And may he give Abraham's blessing to thee, and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest possess the land of thy sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham.

XV. JACOB'S JOURNEY TO HARAN. HIS ARRIVAL AND MARRIAGE THERE.

GOD PROTECTS THE PIOUS, AND SHOWS HIM THE WAY TO SALVATION.

JACOB obeyed his father and his mother, departed from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. On his way he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; he took one of the stones of that place, put it under his head, and lay down there to sleep. And he had a dream: a ladder was set upon the earth, but its top reached to heaven, and the angels of the Lord were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed. Thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, to the north, and to the south; so that in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I will be with thee; I will keep thee wherever thou goest, and will bring thee again unto this land; for I will not forsake thee, but fulfil unto thee all that I have promised thee. When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he said, Verily, the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. How awful is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. In the morning, Jacob rose early, took the stone that he had put under his head, set it up for a monument, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he vowed a vow, and said, If God be with me, and keep me on this way that I am going, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on;[1] and if I return

[1] The moderation and contented disposition of Jacob. He prayed only for the most necessary things in life, for bread and raiment, and for the divine protection. This appeared to him sufficient to attain his destiny here below, and to enjoy happiness.

again to my father's house in peace, and the Lord will be my protector, then this stone which I have erected for a monument shall become God's house (i. e. dedicated to divine worship), and all that thou shalt give me I will assuredly tithe unto thee. Hereupon Jacob continued his journey to the land eastward. He looked, and beheld a well in the field, and three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well the flocks were watered; but there was a great stone upon the mouth of the well; therefore all the flocks were gathered thither, the stone was then rolled from the mouth of the well, and the sheep watered. And Jacob said unto the shepherds, My friends, whence are ye? and they said, Of Haran are we. He said unto them, Know ye Laban, the son of Nahor? They said, We do know him. He then said unto them, Is he well? They said, He is well; behold, his daughter Rachel is just coming with the sheep. Rachel was of a goodly figure, and of a fair complexion. And while he yet spoke with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. When Jacob saw her, he drew near, rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flocks of Laban. And he told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, namely, Rebeka's son. She ran and told it her father. When he heard the tidings of Jacob's arrival, he ran to meet him, embraced and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And Jacob told Laban all that had happened.[1] When Jacob had been with him for a month, Laban said unto him, Is it because thou art my kinsman that thou shouldst serve me for nought? tell me, what shall be thy wages? But Jacob loved Rachel, and he said, I will serve thee seven years for thy youngest daughter, Rachel. And Laban replied, Better I give her to thee than to another, abide then with me. Hereupon Jacob served for Rachel seven years; but they seemed unto him as a few days, in his love to her. When the time had expired, Laban assembled all the people of the place, and made a feast. But he gave Jacob his eldest daughter, Leah, for a wife, and his bondwoman, Zilpah, he gave her for a maid. And Jacob said to Laban, Was it not for Rachel I have served thee? Wherefore then hast thou deceived me? Laban replied and said, In our place we are not in the habit of giving away the younger before the elder.

[1] Viz.: what had occurred in the family, and what had occasioned his journey to Haran.

When the wedding week shall be past, thou shalt have this one also, for the servitude which thou shalt serve with me seven other years. And Jacob consented. When, therefore, the wedding week of Leah had expired, Laban gave him also his daughter Rachel for a wife, and Bilhah, his bondwoman, he gave her for a maid.[1] Leah bore unto Jacob six sons, viz. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; and a daughter, whose name was Dinah. Zilpah, Leah's maid, bore him two sons, Gad and Asher. Bilhah, the maid of Rachel, bore him also two sons, Dan and Naphtali. And Rachel, too, bore unto him a son, who was called Joseph.

XVI. JACOB'S SECRET DEPARTURE. LABAN'S PURSUIT AFTER HIM. RECONCILIATION AND AMICABLE FAREWELL SCENE.

"When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Prov. xvi. 7.

JACOB served Laban as shepherd other six years, for the cattle which was his reward. And Jacob increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, bondmen and bondwomen, camels and asses. But he heard the words of Laban's sons, who said, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he acquired all this wealth. Jacob also noticed the countenance of Laban, that it was not toward him as before. The Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy father's, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee. And Jacob did as the Lord had told him. He arose, set his sons and his wives upon camels, and carried away all his cattle, and all his goods, which he had acquired in Padan Aram, to go to Isaac, his father, in the land of Canaan; for Laban was gone to shear his sheep, and so Jacob succeeded in making his escape, and he turned toward Mount Gilead. When Laban was told that Jacob was fled, he pursued him, and overtook him. And Laban said to Jacob, Wherefore didst thou abscond secretly, and carry away my daughters like captives taken in war? Why didst thou not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp? But now thou hast not even suffered

[1] According to the then prevailing custom of the age and the country, a man was permitted to have more than one wife.

me to kiss my sons and my daughters; behold, thou hast acted foolishly. Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid thou wouldst by force take thy daughters from me. I have now been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle. That which was torn I brought not unto thee, I bore the loss of it; and that which was stolen thou didst require of me. By day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes: but thou didst, nevertheless, alter my wages ten times. Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the revered One of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst now sent me away empty. God hath seen mine affliction, and the labour of my hands, and hath decided. Laban answered and said unto Jacob, The daughters, the sons, the cattle, and all that thou seest, are mine; but what can I now do to my daughters, or unto their children, whom they have borne? Come, let us make a covenant (of brotherhood), I and thou, and let it be for a witness between me and thee. And they erected a monument of stones upon Mount Gilead. Then Jacob slaughtered a beast, and invited Laban and his kinsmen to a repast. They partook of it, and tarried over night on the mount. The morning after, Laban rose early, kissed his grandsons and daughters, and blessed them; he then departed and returned to his home.

XVII. THE NAME OF ISRAEL. RECONCILIATION OF JACOB AND ESAU.

HUMILITY AND GRATITUDE TOWARDS GOD. FRATERNAL LOVE.

Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau, unto the land of Seir, in the plain of Edom. And commanded them to tell Esau, Thus hath thy servant Jacob said: With Laban have I sojourned until now, and there acquired considerable property: I now send to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight. The messengers returned, and said to Jacob, We came to thy brother, to Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, having four hundred men with him. Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he prayed, and said, O God of my father Abraham, and of my father Isaac, Lord, who saidst to me, Return unto thy country and kindred, and I will

deal well with thee: I am too unworthy of all the mercies and truth which thou hast done unto thy servant; for with my staff only I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two camps. O deliver me, I pray, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he come and slay me, mother with children. He stayed there that night, and took from the cattle he had with him a rich present for his brother Esau, namely: two hundred she-goats, twenty he-goats; two hundred ewes, and twenty rams; thirty milch camels, with their foals; forty cows, and ten bulls; twenty she-asses, and ten asses. All these he divided into herds, sent them on with the shepherds before him, and commanded the foremost to say, This is a present sent unto my lord Esau, and thy servant Jacob himself followeth behind us. Thus he commanded the second and the third shepherd: for he said, I will appease his anger with the present that goeth before me, and afterwards I will see his face; perhaps he will receive me the more favourably. Thus the present went on before him, but he stayed that night in the camp. And he arose that night, and conducted his wives, his children, and all that he had, over the brook Jabbok. Jacob remaining thus alone, a man[1] wrestled with him until the rising of the morning dawn, but he could not prevail against him. In the struggle, however, Jacob's thigh was sprained; the man then said, Let me go, for the morning dawn ariseth. Jacob said, I will not let thee go unless thou bless me. He then said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall no longer be called Jacob but *also* Israel; for thou hast contended with a God-like being, and with men,[2] and hast prevailed. Then Jacob asked him and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore dost thou ask after my name? And he blessed him there. Jacob called the place Peniel (divine countenance), for (said he) I have seen a God-like being face to face, and my life was preserved. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the nerve Nashe, which is upon the hollow of the thigh,[3] unto this day, because he struck the hollow of Jacob's thigh.

[1] An angel, as we learn from the sequel.

[2] The original signification of the word ישראל.

[3] This gave rise to the prohibition (Gen. xxxii. 33) of eating from the hind quarters of oxen and sheep, unless previously prepared in a peculiar manner by one whom the higher religious functionaries have specially instructed and authorised for the purpose.

When Jacob raised his eyes he saw Esau was coming, with four hundred men. He passed on before the women and the children, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, in drawing near to his brother. But Esau ran to meet him, embraced him, fell on his neck, and kissed him; and they wept.[1] And Esau raised his eyes, and beholding the women and the children, he said, Who are these with thee? He said, These are the children which the Lord hath graciously given thy servant. Then the women and the children approached and bowed down. And Esau said, What meanest thou by all that drove which I met? Jacob answered, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord. Esau said, I have plenty, my brother; keep to thyself what thou hast. But Jacob said, Nay, if I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand; for therefore have I seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of a god-like being,[2] and thou didst accept me. Take, I pray thee, my present that was brought to thee, because I have every thing. So he urged him, and Esau took it. Esau returned that day on his way to Seir; but Jacob journeyed to Succoth, built for himself a house, and made booths for his cattle; therefore the name of the place is called Succoth (booths). Thus Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, in the land of Canaan, and there bought part of a field.

XVIII. DINAH. THE DEATH OF RACHEL AND ISAAC.

"The seducing mouth is a deep pit; the abhorred of the Lord fall into it."
Prov. xxii. 14.

Dinah, the daughter of Leah, went out to see the daughters of the land. And when Shechem, the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and retained her with him. And he became attached to Dinah, the daughter of Jacob; he loved the damsel, and spake kindly to her. And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this young maiden for a wife. Now Jacob had heard what had happened to Dinah; but his sons were with the

[1] The better qualities of man often do not appear until an opportunity arrives. It is not the rude, revengeful Esau, but the tender brother whom we here behold. All hatred has disappeared.

[2] Having found thee the affectionate, comforting brother, instead of the hostile, and threatening Esau.

cattle in the field, therefore he remained silent until they came home. And Hamor, the father of Shechem, went out unto Jacob to speak to him, regarding his daughter. When the sons of Jacob came from the field, and heard the matter, they were much grieved and very wroth; and they said, It would be an infamy for us to give our sister to a heathen, such ought not to be done. And they contrived a scheme, by which they feigned to consent to the marriage of Shechem with their sister. And on the third day, when they knew that they could overcome the city, Simeon and Levi, brothers of Dinah, took each his sword, and surprised the city, which thought itself secure, and slew all the males, and plundered the city, and took the herds, with all that was in the field. Also Hamor, and Shechem his son, they slew with the edge of the sword; and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and left the place. Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me, by rendering me abhorred by the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and Perizzites; seeing that I have but few men, they will gather themselves against me and slay me, so that I shall be destroyed, I and my house. And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with a harlot?[1]

God appeared unto Jacob when he came from Padan Aram, and blessed him. He said unto him, Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall henceforth be thy name. Thus he called his name Israel.[2] The Lord also said unto him, I am God Almighty; thou shalt increase and multiply, numerous nations shall come of thee, and kings descend from thee. And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I will give to thee, that is, to thy posterity. Jacob erected a

[1] Such were the dreadful consequences of a desire to please, and of the immoral conduct of Dinah. A whole town was desolated, and many hundreds of innocent people were slain by the sword of the wrathful brothers, who vented their rage in taking an unsparing revenge upon the whole place, where their sister had been dishonoured. The purity of morals of their house and tribe they would not suffer to be violated with impunity. Dinah was gone abroad to be seen; such is not the conduct of the good and chaste maiden, who should stay at home with her parents and attend to her domestic duties, and not create an opportunity for temptation to evil, by improperly roaming about, in order to see and be seen. Dinah's punishment was bitter and severe. She brought sorrow and woe upon herself and her family, and caused the shedding of innocent blood, and many other crimes. "A bad daughter causeth father and mother to be hated, and whoever looketh at her hateth her." Sirach.

[2] A confirmation of the blessing (already mentioned above) which he had received from the angel.

monument of stone in the place where the Lord had appeared unto him, and poured oil over it. As he was journeying with his family from Beth-el toward Ephrath, Rachel bore him a son; she was in hard labour, and died. Dying, she called her son Ben-oni (son of pain), but Jacob called him Benjamin (son of age). Thus died Rachel; she was buried in the way to Ephrath, now called Beth-lehem. Jacob erected a monument upon her grave: this is the monument of Rachel's grave unto this day. Jacob now came with his wives, his twelve sons, and his daughter Dinah, as well as with all his goods which he had acquired in Padan Aram, to his father Isaac in Hebron, which is in the land of Canaan. When Isaac was a hundred and eighty years of age he died, being old and full of days, and was gathered unto his ancestors. His sons Esau and Jacob buried him in the cave of Machpelah, which is near Hebron.

XIX. JOSEPH'S BRETHREN ARE JEALOUS OF HIM. THEY FORM HOSTILE INTENTIONS AGAINST HIM, AND SELL HIM.

TALKATIVENESS AND TALE-TELLING ARE BAD HABITS: ENVY LEADS TO HATRED AND WICKED DEEDS.

Jacob now dwelt in the land of Canaan. The following are the adventures of Joseph:—Joseph, being seventeen years of age, was feeding the flock with his brethren, and was as a lad, with the sons of Bilhah and of Zilpah, his father's wives: but Joseph brought their father all kinds of evil reports regarding them.[1] Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a coat of various colours. When his brethren saw that their father loved him more than any of his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak unto him peaceably. And Joseph once had a dream, and told it to his brethren, saying to them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed. Behold, it was as if we were binding sheaves in the field, and as if my sheaf arose, and stood upright, while your sheaves stood around, and bowed down to my sheaf. Then his brethren said unto him, Dost thou think thou shalt reign over us as king? or have

[1] Probably not with an evil design, that is, with a view to slander; nevertheless, he drew down upon himself hatred and hostility. Let this be a warning for us, and teach us to be silent where we cannot say anything good.

dominion over us? So they hated him still more for his dreams and for his words. He dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, it was as if the sun, the moon, and eleven stars, were bowing down to me. His father rebuked him, and said, What dream is this that thou hast dreamed? Shall we, I, thy mother, and thy brethren, come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren became jealous of him, but his father preserved the thing in his memory. One day, his brethren being gone to feed their father's flock in Shechem, Israel said unto Joseph, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and with the flocks, and bring me word again. He said, I am ready; and he left his father to go to Shechem. On his way, a man found him, as he was straying in the field; the man asked him, What seekest thou? He said, I seek my brethren; pray, tell me, where they are feeding their flocks. The man replied, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. Then Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan. When they descried him at a distance, they complotted against him, to slay him. And they said to each other, Behold, there the dreamer cometh. Now come, let us slay him, and cast him into one of the pits, and we will say, Some wild beast hath devoured him; we shall then see what will become of his dreams. When Reuben heard this, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, Let us not kill him. And he also said to them, Shed no blood; cast him into the pit that is in the wilderness, but lay no hand upon him. This he said in order to deliver him out of their hands, and to bring him back to his father. When Joseph was come unto his brethren, they stripped him of his coat, namely, the coat of various colours he had on, took him, and cast him into a pit. Then they sat down to eat; and lo! a caravan of merchants came passing by, with camels laden, to go down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profiteth it that we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to these merchants, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is still our brother, our flesh: and his brethren obeyed him. They drew Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the merchants for twenty pieces of silver. When Reuben returned unto the pit, and found Joseph no longer in it, he rent his clothes, returned unto his brethren, and said, The lad is not here; and I, whither shall I go? The brethren took Joseph's coat, and having killed

a kid of the goats, they dipped the coat in the blood; and sent the coat of various colours, and brought it to their father, saying, This have we found, know now whether it is thy son's coat or not.[1] He recognised it, and said, It is my son's coat, a ferocious beast hath devoured him; Joseph hath been torn in pieces. Then Jacob rent his garments, put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son a long time. All his children came to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, I will go down into the grave unto my son, mourning. Thus his father bewailed him.

XX. JOSEPH IS BROUGHT DOWN TO EGYPT, AND SOLD FOR A SLAVE.

The fear of the Lord guards against sin. A pure, guiltless conscience affords soothing consolation in times of trouble, and renders the most disagreeable condition supportable.

JOSEPH was meanwhile brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, and captain of the body-guard, had bought him of the merchants, who had brought him down thither. The Lord was with Joseph, and whatsoever he did in the house of his master the Egyptian, the Lord caused to prosper in his hands. When his master saw this, Joseph found favour in his sight, and he appointed him overseer over his house; and all that he had he entrusted to him. And the Lord blessed the house of the Egyptian for Joseph's sake, so that the blessing of the Lord became visible upon all that was his, both in the house and in the field. Now Joseph was a comely person, and well favoured. And it happened, that one day his master's wife wished to entice him to a bad action; but he refused, and said, Behold, my master hath confided to me all that he hath in the house, and hath not withheld any thing from me; how then should I commit this great wickedness, and sin against God? As she, however, continued to make attempts at seducing him, and as he would not hearken unto her, she spoke unfavourably of him to the men of the house.

[1] Thus does one vice lead to another: here we have first, jealousy; then, hatred; then, design of murder and cruelty towards a brother; and then, falsehoods, which overwhelm the aged father with grief. "Beware of the *first* step to sin. Inclination and passion hurry thee imperceptibly on, and lure thee into ruin."

And when his master was come home, she traduced Joseph in his ears, and accused him falsely. When the master heard the words of his wife, his wrath was kindled. And he took Joseph, and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined. But the Lord was with Joseph,[1] and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. This keeper committed to Joseph's care all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he directed to be done. The keeper looked not to any thing that was under his care, because the Lord was with him; and that which he did, the Lord caused to prosper.

It happened about the same time, that the chief butler and the chief baker offended their lord, the king of Egypt. Pharaoh was wroth against these two officers, and had them put into the prison, in which Joseph was confined; and the latter was appointed to wait upon them. When they had been a year in custody, they both dreamed a different dream in the same night. And when Joseph came to them in the morning, he perceived that they were in trouble; and he asked them, Why are your countenances so sad to-day? They replied, We have had a dream, but there is none to interpret it. Then Joseph said, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me the dreams, I pray you. Hereupon the chief butler told his dream, and said, In my dream, it was as if a vine appeared before me; and on the vine were three branches; they seemed to bud, and to shoot forth blossoms, and the clusters thereof became ripe grapes. And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; I took the grapes, and pressed them, and put the cup into Pharaoh's hand. Then Joseph said unto him, This is its interpretation: The three branches are three days; within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee to thy office. And thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand in the

[1] True virtue is not overcome by any calamity, nor discouraged by any danger; nay, it even acquires fresh vigour after every temptation resisted, and shines with increased lustre within the soul that harbours it: thus, resembling gold, which not only is not destroyed by fire, but issues from it with a greater brightness. And thus was it with Joseph: with that tranquillity of mind, which is the result of conscious innocence, he bears cheerfully the transition from a happy state to a dungeon; *but the Lord was with him:* for the Lord loves his pious followers, and protects them. Hence the prison became unto Joseph the friendly dwelling of peace and useful activity; and, strange enough, the preparation for his happiness, and for the highest dignities.

same manner as at first, when thou wast his butler. Therefore, if thou wilt remember me, when it shall be well with thee, pray show kindness unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, so that thou bringest me out of this house: for, indeed, I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews, and here also I have done nothing for which they should put me into a dungeon. When the chief baker saw that he had interpreted the dream for good, he said to Joseph, In my dream it appeared to me as if three wicker baskets were on my head; in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of food for Pharaoh, pastry work; and the birds were eating them out of the basket upon my head. Joseph answered and said, This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days; within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall have thee hanged on a tree, where the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee. On the third day, being the day on which Pharaoh was born, he made a feast unto all his servants; on which occasion he reinstated the chief butler in his office, but the chief baker he hanged, as Joseph had interpreted to them; yet, the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him entirely.

XXI. JOSEPH IS LIBERATED FROM PRISON, AND PROMOTED TO HIGH DIGNITIES.

"He that pursueth righteousness and mercy, findeth long life, righteousness, and honour." Prov. xxi. 21.

Two years after these events, Pharaoh also had a dream. He dreamed he stood by the river; and from the river there came up seven kine, goodly in appearance, and fat in flesh, and fed in the reed grass: and seven other kine came up after them from the river, bad in appearance, and lean in flesh, which devoured the better kine; whereupon he awoke. And he slept and dreamed a second time; and it was as if seven ears of corn came up on one stalk, rank and good; and seven ears, thin and parched by the east wind, sprung up after them, and swallowed the seven full ears; whereupon Pharaoh awoke. The following morning his mind was uneasy. And he sent for all the wise men of Egypt, and told them his dream; but none knew how to interpret it. Then spake the chief butler to Pharaoh, and said, My transgression do I call to mind

this day. Pharaoh was once wroth with his servant, and placed me and the chief baker in custody. We each dreamed a dream in one night. And there was with us a Hebrew youth, servant to the captain of the body-guard; we related our dreams unto him, and he interpreted them unto us. And as he had interpreted, so did it come to pass; me they replaced in my office, and him they hanged. Then Pharaoh sent to the prison for Joseph. And he shaved himself, changed his raiment, and appeared before Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and none knoweth how to interpret it; but I have heard say of thee, that thou understandest a dream to interpret it. Joseph answered Pharaoh, and said, Far from me, but God will give an answer of peace to Pharaoh.[1] Pharaoh now told Joseph his dream. And Joseph said to Pharaoh, The seven goodly kine denote seven years, and the seven good ears also denote seven years; the two dreams are only one. And the seven bad kine, as well as the seven thin ears, denote seven years of famine. Behold, there will come seven years of great abundance in the whole land of Egypt; but there will arise, immediately after them, seven years of famine, so that all the abundance of the land of Egypt shall be forgotten. Let Pharaoh then select a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt, that he may store up provision in the years of plenty, lest the land perish in the seven years of famine. This thing pleased Pharaoh, and all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants, Can we, indeed, find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God? And to Joseph he said, Since God hath made known all this unto thee, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art; thou shalt be appointed over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be guided, only in the throne will I be greater than thou. He then drew off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain around his neck; he also let him ride in a state carriage, and they proclaimed before him, Bend the knee: thus did he set him over the whole land of Egypt. Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath Paaneah (i. e. the revealer of secrets); and gave him to wife Asenath, the daugh-

[1] This is the language of a noble modesty and piety, far from all boasting and self-sufficiency. "The Lord, to whom all secrets are manifest, will answer Pharaoh, through me; but I alone cannot do it."

ter of a priest of On. Joseph was then thirty years of age. He now made a tour over the whole land of Egypt, and everywhere heaped up grain as the sand of the sea, exceedingly much, and laid up stores in the cities. And Asenath bore unto Joseph two sons, the first-born of whom he called Manasseh, and the other Ephraim.

When the seven years of plenty were ended, the seven years of famine began to come, according as Joseph had said. Now the famine was in all countries, but in the whole land of Egypt there was bread. The people cried unto Pharaoh for bread; but Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph, what he saith to you, do. And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians. And all countries in the vicinity came to Egypt, to Joseph, to buy corn, because the famine was grievous in the land.

XXII. JOSEPH'S BRETHREN IN EGYPT.

TRIAL. REPENTANCE.

"He that covereth his sins, shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh (his sins) shall have mercy." Prov. xxviii. 13.

When Jacob heard that there was corn to be sold in Egypt, he said unto his sons, Go down to Egypt, and buy for us from thence, that we may live and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to Egypt to purchase corn; but Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Perhaps an accident may happen to him. Thus the sons of Israel came to Egypt to buy corn, amongst other comers. And they came before Joseph, and prostrated themselves before him to the ground. Joseph recognised them, but they recognised not him. And he feigned himself a stranger to them, spoke harshly unto them, and said, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan, to buy food. Joseph continued, and said, Ye are spies; ye are come to see the nakedness of the land. They replied, Nay, my lord, thy servants have come only to purchase food. We, thy servants, are all the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; the youngest is now with our father, and one is no more. Joseph said to them, It is as I have spoken unto you, saying, Ye are spies. By this shall ye be proved: by the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go hence unless your younger brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother; and ye shall be kept

in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be truth in you; for if not, by the life of Pharaoh, ye are spies. Hereupon they were put into custody for three days. And on the third day, Joseph said unto them, This do that ye may live; I fear God. If ye be honest men, let one of your brethren be confined in prison; but ye go home, and take corn for the famine of your houses. Then bring your youngest brother unto me, that your words be verified, and that ye die not. And they said to each other, Verily, we are guilty because of our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he implored us, and we would not hear, therefore hath this distress befallen us. Reuben answered them and said, Did I not then tell you, when I said, Sin not against the child; but ye would not hear, and now his blood is required. Now, they knew not that Joseph understood them, for he spoke unto them through an interpreter. He turned away from them, and wept.[1] He then returned and spoke with them, took Simeon[2] from them, and bound him before their eyes. Joseph commanded to fill their vessels with corn, also to restore the money of each into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them. And they loaded their corn on their asses, and departed. And they came unto their father Jacob, unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that had occurred unto them. When they were emptying their sacks, every man had his bundle of money in his sack. They saw the bundles, and were terrified, and said to each other, What is this that God hath done unto us? But when they also reported that they had been commanded to bring their youngest brother before the man, down to Egypt, Jacob, their father, said unto them, Ye will deprive me of my children; Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and now ye will also take Benjamin; all these misfortunes befall me. But my son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left; if now mischief should befall him on the way, ye would bring down my hoary head with sorrow to the grave.

[1] Their repentant confession moved his tenderness so strongly, that the noble brother, full of fraternal affection, could not refrain from shedding tears of sympathy. Hence it is evident, that his conduct towards his brothers was by no means dictated by designs of vengeance; but it seemed to him necessary to test their sentiments, in order to discover, whether they really repented of their misdeed towards him, and whether they were truly attached to their aged afflicted father, as well as to their younger brother.

[2] Probably, as Simeon had once treated him most harshly and inimically, he now had to sustain a more severe trial.

XXIII. JOSEPH'S BROTHERS A SECOND TIME IN EGYPT.

SECOND TRIAL. BENJAMIN.

"As silver is tried in the cauldron, gold in the furnace, so man according to the worth of what he praiseth." Prov. xxvii. 21.

MEANWHILE the famine was still grievous in the land. And when they had consumed the food which they had brought from Egypt, their father said unto them, Return and buy us a little food. Then Judah answered, If thou sendest not our brother with us, we cannot go down, for the man warned us, and said, Ye shall not behold my face unless your brother be with you. Send the youth with us, and we will arise and go, that we live and die not, we as well as thou, and our children. I will be surety for him; at my hand shalt thou demand him: if I return him not unto thee, I will have sinned to thee all my days. Then spake Israel their father unto them, Since it must be so, do this: take of the best fruit of the land in your vessels, and carry down a present to the man, a little balm, a little honey, spices and laudanum, pistachio nuts and almonds. And take double money with you, namely, the money also that was put into your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. Your brother also take; arise, and return to the man. And God Almighty grant you mercy before the man, that he may dismiss your other brother and Benjamin; but I, if I am to be bereaved of my children, be I bereaved of them. The men took the present, and double the money, arose, and went down to Egypt, and came before Joseph. Joseph ordered his steward to conduct the men into his house, and to prepare a meal, for (said he) they shall dine with me at noon; but when the men were brought into Joseph's house, they were much afraid, on account of the money which they had found in their sacks; indeed, they thought they would be surprised and attacked. their asses would be taken from them, and themselves made bondmen. And they spoke unto the steward and said, Pardon, my lord, when on our return we came to the inn, we opened our sacks, and found, each of us, his purchase-money at the mouth of the sack. This we have brought back with us, as well as other money to purchase food: we know not who put our money into our sacks. He answered, Be of good courage, fear ye not; your God, and the God of your fathers, gave you a treasure in your sacks; your money I received. He then

brought out Simeon unto them. The man brought them water to wash their feet, and also gave provender to their asses. They, meanwhile, prepared the present against Joseph's arrival at midday; for they had heard that they were to dine there. When Joseph came home, they brought him the present, and bowed themselves to him to the ground. And he inquired after their welfare, and further said, Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he yet alive? They answered, Thy servant, our father, is well, he is yet alive; they again bowed and prostrated themselves. He lifted up his eyes, and beheld his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is not this your younger brother, of whom you spoke to me? And he further said, Be God gracious unto thee, my son. Joseph hastened away, for his tenderness was excited towards his brother. And he entered the inner chamber, and wept there. He then washed his face, went out and restrained himself, and said, Serve up the provisions. They served up for him alone, for them alone, and for the Egyptians that dined with him also alone, because the Egyptians deemed it an abomination to eat with the Hebrews. They were told to sit down before Joseph, the first-born according to his seniority, and the youngest according to his youth. And the men wondered at this to each other. They drank, and were intoxicated at his house. But Joseph commanded his steward, and said, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they are able to carry, and put every man's money at the mouth of his sack, and my silver cup put at the mouth of the sack of the youngest. He did according as Joseph had spoken. When morning dawned, the men were dismissed, they with their asses. They had not yet gone far from the city, when Joseph sent the steward to pursue them. He overtook them, and said, Why have ye repaid evil for good? Is it not the cup from which my lord drinketh? He will surely discover the truth; ye have acted wrongly in so doing. They said unto him, Why speaketh my lord thus? It were unworthy of thy servants to do the like. Behold, the money which we found in our sacks, we brought back out of the land of Canaan; how then should we steal silver or gold from the house of thy master? He of thy servants with whom it is found shall die, and we also will become my lord's bondmen. He said, He with whom it is found shall be my bondman, but ye shall be guiltless. Each having let down his sack on the ground, the steward began to search, commencing at the eldest, and finishing

at the youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. They rent their garments, and returned unto the city. And they came to Joseph, and fell down before him on the ground. And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this ye have done? Know ye not that a man like me will discover the truth? Judah then said, What shall we say unto my lord, or how shall we justify ourselves? God hath determined the punishment of thy servants; here we are thy bondmen. And he said, Far be that from me; he only with whom the cup was found shall be my bondman, but ye go up in peace to your father. Then Judah approached him and said, Pardon, my lord, and let not thine anger kindle against him, for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, Have ye yet a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord, We have yet an old father, and a younger brother, the child of his old age, whose real brother is dead; he alone is left to his mother, and his father loveth him. Thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eye upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father; for if he should leave his father, he would die. But thou saidst unto thy servants, Unless your youngest brother come down with you, you shall not again appear in my presence. Now when we came up unto thy servant, my father, we related to him the words of my lord. Our father said, Go again, buy us a little food. But we said, We cannot go down; if our youngest brother be not with us, then we will go down; for we cannot appear in the man's presence unless our youngest brother be with us. Then thy servant, my father, said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons; the one went away from me, and I said, Assuredly he is torn in pieces, as I have, hitherto, not seen him again: if now ye take this one also from me, and mischief should befall him, ye will bring down my grey hair with sorrow to the grave. Now, therefore, if I come to thy servant, my father, whose life is bound up with the lad's life, and if he should see that the lad is not with us, he would die; and thy servant would have brought down the grey hair of our father in sorrow to the grave: for thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not again unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. Now, therefore, I pray thee, let me remain instead of the lad, a bondman to my lord, that the lad may go up with his brethren.

XXIV. JOSEPH MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN.

"Kind words are as honeycomb, agreeable to the soul, and comforting to the heart." Prov. xvi. 24.

THEN Joseph could no longer restrain himself before all that stood by him, so he cried, Let every man withdraw. And there stayed no man with him besides his brethren. And he wept aloud, while he said, I am Joseph. Is my father yet alive? But his brethren could not answer him, for they were astounded at his presence. Then Joseph said unto his brethren, Approach me, I pray you. They approached, and he said, I am your brother Joseph, whom ye sold into Egypt. And now be ye not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for to preserve life God sent me before you. For two years hath the famine now been in the land, and yet five years will come, in which there shall be neither ploughing nor reaping. Therefore, God sent me before you, to preserve for you an existence on the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance; for not ye sent me hither but God: he hath appointed me as father to Pharaoh, as a lord over all his house, and ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.[1] Haste ye, go up to my father, and tell him all that ye have seen here, that he may come down here with his children, his children's children, and all that he hath. He shall dwell in the land of Goshen, that he be near unto me, and that I may nourish you all, during the years of famine. Therefore, haste ye, and bring my father hither. Then he fell upon the neck of his brother Benjamin, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. He also kissed all his brethren, and wept; and after that, his brethren talked with him. When Pharaoh heard that Joseph's brethren were come, it pleased him well, and his servants. And he told Joseph to let his father and his household come; and to assign to them the best portion of the land of Egypt. Joseph now gave them waggons and provision for the road. He also gave to all his brethren changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his father, he sent ten asses loaded

[1] Again, the gentle language of the truly religious and noble-minded man. He is convinced of the repentance of his brothers, and he now comforts them in affectionate terms, so that they shall no longer see in him the governor of Egypt, but the pacified brother.

with the best productions of Egypt, and ten she-asses loaded with corn, bread, and food for his father by the way. They went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan, unto Jacob their father. And they reported to him that Joseph was yet alive, and that he was governor over all the land of Egypt; but the heart of the aged man was now too weak, so that he believed them not. When they told him all the words of Joseph which he had said unto them, and when he also saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob revived. And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die.

XXV. JACOB GOES DOWN WITH HIS FAMILY TO EGYPT.

"O, how doth the father of the righteous rejoice! how delighted is he with the wise child!" Prov. xxiii. 24.

Israel journeyed with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, where he offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. God spoke unto Israel in a vision of the night: I am the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt, for a great nation I will make of thee there. I will go down with thee to Egypt, and I will also assuredly bring thee up again, and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes. Israel rose up from Beer-sheba, he and his sons, their wives and children, together with all their goods, to go down to Egypt. And the family of Jacob that arrived in Egypt, with the two sons of Joseph, consisted of seventy persons.

Joseph went up in his chariot to meet Israel his father, to Goshen. When he presented himself before him, he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a long while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, that thou art yet alive. Jacob was now with his family in the land of Goshen. Soon after, Joseph went out and reported to Pharaoh, saying, My father and my brethren, with their flocks, their herds, and all that is theirs, are come from the land of Canaan, and are now in the land of Goshen. And from the youngest among his brethren he took five men, and presented them before Pharaoh. Pharaoh said to Joseph, The land of Egypt is before thee; settle thy father and thy brethren in the best of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen: and if thou knowest any men of ability among them, appoint thou

them overseers over my own cattle. Joseph also presented his father Jacob before Pharaoh. Jacob saluted Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How many are the years of thy life? Jacob replied, The years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and unhappy have the years of my life been, and they have not reached the years of the life of my fathers, in their pilgrimage. Jacob again saluted Pharaoh, and withdrew from his presence. Joseph now settled his father and his brethren in the best part of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. The children of Israel thus settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen; they held possessions there, and increased exceedingly. And Joseph supplied his father's house with bread, according to the number of children. He also supplied the whole land of Egypt with corn, during the years of famine; but all the money, the cattle, and the land, which he received in exchange for the corn, he appropriated to Pharaoh.

XXVI. THE LAST WILL, AND DEATH OF JACOB.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psalm cxvi. 15.

Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years, so all the years of Jacob's life were one hundred and forty-seven years. When the time of Israel's death drew near, he called his son Joseph, and said to him, If I have found favour in thy sight, act towards me with kindness and truth, and bury me not in Egypt. When I shall be dead, do thou carry me out of Egypt, and bury me with my forefathers. Joseph said, I will do according to thy word. He said, Swear to me, and he sware to him. Then Israel bowed towards the head of the bed. When, some time after, Joseph was told that his father was ill, he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. This was announced to Jacob, saying, Thy son Joseph cometh unto thee. Then he strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed. And he said to Joseph, Almighty God appeared unto me at Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me: and said, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee many nations; and I will give this land to thy posterity after thee for an everlasting possession. And now, thy two sons, who were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee, shall be as mine. Ephraim and Manasseh

shall be mine, like Reuben and Simeon. But thy issue which thou mayest have after them, shall be, in their inheritance, called by the name of their brethren. As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan, on the road, while yet there was a considerable way to come unto Ephrath, now called Beth-lehem.[1] When Israel beheld Joseph's sons, he said, Who are these? Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this land. He said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, that I may bless them. But the eyes of Israel were dim from age, so that he could not see well. Joseph brought his sons near him, and Israel kissed them, and embraced them. And he said to Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face once more; and lo, God hath showed me also thine offspring. Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and bowed himself before him to the earth. He then took them both, and brought them near to his father, so that Manasseh stood to the right, and Ephraim to the left of Israel; but Israel placed his right hand designedly upon Ephraim's head, though he was the younger, and his left upon Manasseh's head, though he was the first-born. And he blessed Joseph, and said, The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who hath kept me since I exist unto this day, the angel who redeemed me from all evil, may he bless the lads, that my name, and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, be named through them, and let them multiply exceedingly in the land.[2] When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon Ephraim's head, it displeased him; and he raised his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's unto Manasseh's head, saying to his father, Not so, my father, for this is the first-born; put thy right hand upon his head: but his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall become a people, and be great; but yet his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his posterity shall be numerous Thus he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall the people of Israel henceforth bless, saying, God make thee like Ephraim and

[1] This painful recalling of the death of Rachel was probably intended as an apology to the illustrious son, for his (Jacob's) not having been *able* to bury the beloved mother in the family sepulchre at Machpelah, as he makes it obligatory upon Joseph to inter *him* there.

[2] Jacob intended the benediction for Joseph's sons, and yet it is said, he blessed Joseph, because the blessing and joy of parents are the blessing and thriving of their children.

Manasseh.[1] Israel then said unto Joseph, Behold, I die; but God will be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. He then sent for his sons, and blessed them all, in succession, announcing to every one his future destiny. Then he charged them with his last command, and spoke as follows: I am about to be gathered to my people: bury me, with my fathers, in the cave which is in the field of Machpelah, in the land of Canaan; that is, in the cave which Abraham bought for a burying-place possession: there they buried Abraham and Sarah; there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebeka; and there I buried Leah. And when Jacob had finished charging his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed, expired, and was gathered to his fathers.

XXVII. JACOB'S FUNERAL. RETURN TO EGYPT. JOSEPH'S DEATH.

GENEROSITY AND NOBLE CONDUCT OF JOSEPH TOWARDS HIS BRETHREN. PARDON AND COMFORT.

JOSEPH fell upon his father's face, wept over him, and kissed him. And he commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father: and they embalmed Israel. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days. When that period was past, Joseph spoke unto the household of Pharaoh, saying, If I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, and tell him, that my father made me swear, to bury him in his sepulchre, in the land of Canaan; now, therefore, let me go up, I pray, and bury my father, and I will return. Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, as he made thee swear. So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt; also, Joseph's household, as well as his brethren, and the servants of his father; only their little ones, and their cattle, they left in the land of Goshen. There also went up with him chariots and horsemen, so that the procession was very large. Thus the sons of Jacob carried their father into the land of Canaan, and interred him in the cave of the field of Machpelah. When Joseph had buried his father, he returned into Egypt, he with

[1] This continues to this day to be the customary form of blessing bestowed by parents upon their children.

his brethren, and all that had gone up with him. Now, when Joseph's brethren considered that their father was dead, they said, Joseph may perhaps hate us, and fully requite us for all the evil which we did unto him: they therefore deputed one to Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, thus shall ye speak to Joseph: Forgive, I pray thee now, the crime of thy brethren, and their sin, though they did evil unto thee: and now, we pray thee, forgive the crime of the servants of the God of thy father. Joseph wept when he heard these words. Then his brethren also went and fell down before him, and said, Behold, we will be thy bondmen. But Joseph said unto them, Fear not, for am I in the place of God? Though you devised evil against me, God designed it for good,[1] in order to accomplish, as at this day, the preservation of a numerous people: therefore, fear ye not; I will support you, and your little ones. Thus he comforted them, and spoke kindly unto them.[2]

Joseph lived to see Ephraim's children of the third generation, also, the grandchildren of Manasseh were brought up

[1] Let us for a moment consider the all-wise and all-bountiful providence of the Lord in directing the events of Joseph's life. Jacob favoured Joseph more than his other sons; this sowed the first seeds of their jealousy, and caused the old man grief and sorrow for many years. Joseph brought the bad reports of his brothers to his father; he thereby drew down upon himself hatred and persecution, and his consequent lot was to be a slave in a foreign country. His brothers suffered their hatred and jealousy to seduce them to a bad action; regret and remorse caused them much uneasiness, and gave rise to a variery of inconveniences. And yet every thing was for good; every thing was ordained so to happen; every one was first to meet his due reward, and then only the matter was to end in Joseph's greatness, the father's joy in his old age, the maintenance of the whole family during the famine, and lastly, in the fulfilment of what the Lord had long before foretold to his faithful servant Abraham, as it is said (Gen. xv. 13), "Know for a surety, that thy posterity shall be a stranger in a land not their own, and they shall enslave and afflict them four hundred years; but the nation whom they shall serve I will also judge, and afterward they shall go out with great substance." All so simple in the beginning, yet so complicated in the development. All natural consequences, yet so wonderful. Prostrate thyself, oh, man! and, in the dust, adore the Infinite, the Nameless! whose ways are inscrutable, and whose mercy and kindness last from eternity to eternity. Yea, in profound humility we exclaim with the Prophet (Jer. xxxii. 19), "Great, O Lord, in council, and mighty in accomplishment. Thou whose eyes watch the way of men, to reward every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his works."

[2] The truly noble man not only forgives offences, but also sympathises with the contrite heart of his fellow man, who has once forgotten himself; he endeavours, by friendly persuasions, to comfort him, to inspire him with fresh confidence, and to set him perfectly at ease in regard to the past.

upon Joseph's knees. Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: but God will assuredly visit you, and bring you out of this land, unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will visit you, and ye shall carry up with you my bones from hence. Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old: they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES.

ספר שמות

I. BONDAGE OF THE ISRAELITES.

"Thou shalt know, therefore, within thy heart, that the Lord thy God chastiseth thee, as a father chastiseth his child." Deut. viii. 5.

After the death of Joseph and of his brethren, their posterity increased exceedingly, so that they became a numerous people. Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who had not known Joseph. And he said unto his people, The people of the children of Israel are growing too numerous and mighty for us; now, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and, in the event of a war, join our enemies, and fight against us: they, therefore, set task-masters over the people, to oppress them with hard labour; and the children of Israel had to build treasure-cities for Pharaoh, Pithom and Raamses. The Egyptians urged the children of Israel with rigour to their work. And they made their lives bitter with hard labour, in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of work in the field. Pharaoh also commanded the Hebrew midwives, that they should kill all the new-born sons; the daughters, however, they might preserve alive. But as the midwives feared God, and saved the children alive, Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every new-born son ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

II. THE BIRTH OF MOSES, AND HIS MIRACULOUS PRESERVATION.

"He sent redemption unto his people." Psalm cxi. 9. "He remembereth his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations." Psalm cv. 8.

AMRAM, a man of the house of Levi, was married to Jochebed, a daughter of Levi. She bore him a son, who was called Aaron; and a daughter, whose name was called Miriam. And she bore him yet another son. When she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. She could, however, not conceal him any longer, and therefore took an ark of bulrushes, daubed it with slime and with pitch, put the child into it, and laid it in the flags, by the brink of the river. And his sister stood afar off, to see what would happen to him. Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to the river to bathe, and her maidens walked along by the river's side. When she perceived the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. She opened it, and, behold, there was a weeping lad in it; she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the children of the Hebrews. Then said his sister to the daughter of Pharaoh, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women? And Pharaoh's daughter replied, Go. The maid went, and called the child's mother. Then said Pharaoh's daughter to her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. The woman took the child, and nursed it. When the child had grown up, she brought him unto the daughter of Pharaoh; he was to her as a son,[1] and she called him (Moshe) Moses, and said, Because I drew him out of the water.

III. MOSES' FIRST ACTS. HIS FLIGHT TO MIDIAN.

SYMPATHY, PHILANTHROPY, AND JUSTICE.

WHEN Moses was grown up, he went out unto his brethren, and witnessed their heavy work; he also beheld an Egyptian, smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren. When he saw that

[1] How wonderfully does Providence dispose events! The *same* Pharaoh, that used the most powerful means to diminish and to exterminate the Israelites, had to rear their liberator at his own court. "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord." Prov. xxi. 30.

there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and buried him in the sand.[1] The following day he again went out, when he saw two Hebrew men striving together. He said to him who was in the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy neighbour? But he said, Who made thee a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me as thou killedst the Egyptian? Moses was afraid when he perceived that the matter had become known. Pharaoh also heard this thing, and sought to slay Moses. Then Moses fled from Pharaoh, towards the land of Midian. There he one day sat by a well, just at the time when the daughters of Jethro, the priest of Midian, came to draw water, to fill the troughs, and to water the flocks of their father. But the shepherds came and drove them away: then Moses arose, helped the maidens, and watered their flock.[2] When they came home to their grandfather Reuel, he said, How is it that ye are come so soon to day? They said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hands of the shepherds; he also drew water for us, and watered the flock. He said, Why have ye left the man? Call him that he may eat bread. Moses came, and consented to remain with Jethro, who gave him his daughter Zipporah for a wife.

IV. THE FIRST REVELATION OF THE DEITY TO MOSES. HE IS CALLED TO ACT AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NATION.

HUMILITY.

"The result of humility is the fear of the Lord." Prov. xxii. 4. "He maketh known his ways unto Moses, his acts to the sons of Israel." Psalm ciii. 7.

And it came to pass, that a long time after, when the king of Egypt was dead, the children of Israel still groaned under bondage. They cried, and their cry ascended to God from the labour. God heard their groaning, and remembered his

[1] If we form a correct notion of the cruelty with which the Egyptians generally treated the Israelites,—if we consider how ill the unfortunate slave, who groaned under heavy labour was used by this Egyptian in particular, this act of Moses, which, however, was most probably unintentional on his part, cannot excite our surprise. The high-spirited youth (Moses), long disgusted at the inhuman proceedings of the idolatrous and tyrannical nation towards his co-religionists, inflamed by the love of justice and of mankind, on this occasion burst out into laudable indignation.

[2] Here, too, as once in Egypt, his high sense of justice and benevolence impelled him to the fulfilment of the moral duty, "Assist the weak."

covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel (i. e. he saw their deplorable condition), and determined to interpose.[1] Moses led the flock of his father-in-law Jethro into the desert, and came as far as the mountain of God, Horeb. Here an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush of thorns; Moses looked, and behold the bush was in flames, and yet was not consumed. Then Moses said to himself, I must approach to see this extraordinary sight, why the bush is not consumed. But the Lord called unto him from the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. He said, Here am I. The Lord said, Draw not nigher hither; put thy shoes from off thy feet, for the spot upon which thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. The Lord continued and said, I have seen the affliction of my people Israel in Egypt,[2] and their cry by reason of their oppressors hath come up to me, for I well know their troubles: I have appeared to thee, to deliver them from the power of Egypt, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good and extensive land, flowing with milk and honey. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he further said, If I say to the children of Israel, The God of your fathers sendeth me; and they say, What is his name?[3] What shall I say unto them? God said to Moses, I will be with thee, in sending thee to

[1] God, the all-merciful, hearkens to the fervent prayer of the distressed, who wholly confide in him. Thus singeth the holy Psalmist: "He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard." Psalm xxii. 24.

[2] "The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him, to all that call upon him with sincerity." Psalm cxlv. 18.

[3] The oppressive bondage in which the children of Israel had lived for centuries, and the example of superstitious idolatry ever present before their eyes, had extinguished in their minds the belief of their ancestors in the One Eternal Being, and made them abandon the simple and pious mode of life of the Patriarchs; and accustomed as they were by example, to designate the deities with names according to material notions, it was necessary to resuscitate within their minds the spiritual, abstract notion of an invisible and eternal Being. Hence the question which Moses put to the Lord, "How shall I convey to their minds a conception of thy being?"

Pharaoh, and I will also give thee a token, so that the people shall believe thee, that the God of their forefathers hath appeared unto thee: but to the children of Israel thou shalt say, The eternal Being, who is and ever will be, hath sent me to you. Go, then, gather the elders of Israel together, and tell them, The eternal Being, the God of your forefathers, appeared unto me, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, I have visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt: and I have determined to bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, unto the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. I am aware that the king of Egypt will not let you go; but I will stretch out my hand (i. e. my power), and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof; and after that he will let you go. And Moses said to the Lord, Pardon, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue; therefore, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, whomsoever thou wilt send. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made a mouth for man to speak? or who maketh him dumb or deaf? or who maketh that he can hear and see, or that he is blind? Is it not I, the Lord?[1] Now, therefore, go. Thy brother Aaron, the Levite, shall be at thy side, and speak for thee: he cometh even now to meet thee; and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. Put thou the words into his mouth; and I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people, so that he shall serve thee as a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God. But this rod thou shalt take in thy hand, that with it thou mayest work the signs. Moses hereupon returned unto his father-in-law Jethro, and said to him, Let me, I pray thee, return to my brethren in Egypt, and see whether they are yet alive. Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.

[1] The Lord hereby teaches the modest servant he has elected, that our confidence in his Divine power and goodness must be unlimited, and unalloyed by any fear or doubt. "The God who reveals himself to thee, who sends thee, and who has shaped the members of the human body, He knows thy powers, thy capacity for speaking, and will certainly assist thee in thy deficiency of speech."

V. APPEARANCE OF AARON AND MOSES BEFORE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AND BEFORE PHARAOH.

"He sent Moses his servant, and Aaron his chosen one: they showed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham." (Egypt). Psalm cv. 26,27.

THE Lord said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. He went, met him at the mount of God, and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord, which he had commanded him. Moses and Aaron then went to the people of Israel, and Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had told Moses, and wrought the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed; and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and looked upon their affliction (in order to deliver them), they bowed their heads, and worshipped. Afterwards Moses and Aaron came before Pharaoh, and said, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, whose voice I should obey, to let the people of Israel depart? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. Pharaoh continued and said, Moses and Aaron, wherefore do ye hinder the people from their work? Get ye unto your burdens. And on the same day he commanded the task-masters not to give the people any more straw to make bricks, but that they should go and gather straw for themselves; nevertheless, the daily quantity of bricks which they had till then made, they were to continue to furnish daily. He said, They are idle; therefore they say, Let us go and bring a sacrifice unto the Lord. But let the work be made heavier to the men, that they may be more occupied, and not turn to falsehoods. So the people were scattered abroad throughout the land of Egypt, to gather stubble instead of straw. And the officers of the children of Israel were beaten, because the latter did not furnish the due quantity of bricks, and the officers thus saw themselves in an evil case (in a difficulty), being obliged to say, Ye shall not diminish ought from your bricks of your daily task. They met Moses and Aaron, as they came forth from Pharaoh, and said to them, The Lord will look upon you and judge, because ye have made us to be hated in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, by giving them, as it were, a sword in their hands to slay us.

VI. SECOND MISSION OF MOSES AND AARON TO ISRAEL AND PHARAOH. THE TEN PLAGUES.

"Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan." Psalm lxxviii. 12.

THE Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, I have established a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give their posterity the land wherein they sojourned, the land of Canaan. Now I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians force to labour, and I have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I, the eternal and unchangeable Being, will deliver you from the servitude of Egypt, with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments. And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God. Then ye shall know that I, the eternal, unchangeable Being, am your God, who bringeth you out from under the burdens of Egypt. And the land, concerning which I swore to your forefathers, I will give you as a heritage, I, the Eternal. Moses spoke thus unto the children of Israel; but they hearkened not unto him, for anguish of spirit, and for hard labour. And the Lord again spoke unto Moses and Aaron, and said, Go to Pharaoh, and say to him, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness: and if thou refuse to let them go, I will send heavy plagues upon thee, and upon thy people, that thou mayest know that there is none like me upon all the earth. Moses and Aaron did as the Lord had commanded them. But Pharaoh's heart was hardened; he hearkened not unto them, nor would he let the people of Israel go. Moses was eighty years, and Aaron was eighty-three years old, when they spoke unto Pharaoh.

And the Lord smote Pharaoh, and the whole people of Egypt, with heavy plagues, which he commanded Moses and Aaron to bring upon them by miracles. At first all the waters of Egypt were converted into blood, so that the Egyptians could not drink the water. Then frogs came up from all the waters of the land, and covered the whole face thereof, even to the very utensils in the houses. Next, the dust of the whole land of Egypt became vermin. The Lord also brought noisome beasts into the house of Pharaoh, and into the houses of the Egyptians, and a grievous murrain destroyed all the cattle in the

land; but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one. Boils next broke out upon men and beasts, not sparing any of the Egyptians. A dreadful hailstorm, mingled with flaming lightnings, such as had never before been witnessed in Egypt, smote every thing in the field, both man and beast, and every herb, and brake every tree of the field; only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel dwelt, there was no hail. A fierce east wind brought a host of locusts, which covered the face of the whole land, and was in such a quantity as had never before been seen, nor ever will be seen again; and the locusts devoured every herb which the hail had left, so that there remained not any green thing in the land of Egypt. And the Lord next sent a thick darkness, which lasted three days, so that one could not see the other, nor stir from his place; but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. This was the ninth plague with which the Lord smote Pharaoh and his people in Egypt, through Moses and Aaron, because of the children of Israel; for while the plagues continued, Pharaoh used to say to Moses and Aaron, I will let the people go; but as soon as the plague had ceased, he again hardened his heart, and did not let them go. And so it was each time.

VII. ORIGIN OF THE PASSOVER, AND LAWS FOR ITS CELEBRATION. DEPARTURE OF THE ISRAELITES FROM EGYPT.

"He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered, the gracious and merciful Lord." Psalm cxi. 4.

The Lord said to Moses, One more plague will I bring upon Pharaoh and Egypt, afterwards he will let you go; nay, he will even entirely thrust you hence. About midnight I will appear in Egypt, and slay all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from man to beast. And upon all the gods of Egypt, I will exercise judgment, I, the Lord; but against any of the children of Israel not a dog shall move his tongue, neither against a man nor against a beast, that ye may know how the Lord maketh a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

And the Lord furthermore spoke unto Moses and Aaron, saying, Tell the children of Israel, this month shall be unto you the first of all the months of the year.[1] And each of you

[1] The month of Nissan. Hereby we learn that the year is to be a lunar year, computed according to the twelve renewals of the moon, during the common year.

shall take a lamb for his house, and kill it on the fourteenth day of this month, in the evening, and sprinkle of the blood upon the two door-posts: but they shall eat the flesh thereof that night, roasted by the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. And the blood shall be to you for a sign upon the houses where ye are, that I may pass over you, and that no plague come upon you, to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall in the future be unto you for a day of memorial, to be kept as a feast to the Lord. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, in the evening, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day in the evening: but even the first day ye shall remove all leaven out of your houses, for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, his person shall be cut off from Israel. Be mindful to observe the feast of unleavened bread, for in this self-same day have I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations as a perpetual ordinance. Also, all the first-born among the children of Israel, both of man and beast, shall be sanctified to me. And it shall be, when your children one day shall ask you, what this feast meaneth unto you, that ye shall say, It is the feast of Passover, in honour of the Lord, because he passed over the houses of the Israelites[1] in Egypt, when he slew the first-born, and spared our houses and our first-born. And it shall be for a token upon your hands, and for frontlets between your eyes,[2] so that the precept of the Lord constantly remain in your mouth, viz.: that He brought you forth out of Egypt[3] with a strong hand. Moses and Aaron went and told the children of Israel, as the Lord had commanded them: and the children of Israel did accordingly.

And it came to pass, that at midnight, the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that was to sit on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of cattle. And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. Pharaoh sent for Moses and

[1] The proper meaning of the word פסח.

[2] Origin of the ceremony of wearing תפילין (Phylacteries), during the morning prayer.

[3] And that we ever be mindful, that He is the all-powerful, all-bountiful, and all-wise God, who now, as thousands of years ago, shows us grace and favour, and governs the universe and all the creatures therein according to his pleasure.

Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, get ye forth from amongst my people, both ye and the children of Israel, together with their flocks and herds; go, and serve the Lord, as ye have said, but bless me also. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, and made them depart in haste, for they said, We are all dead men. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading-troughs being bound up in clothes upon their shoulders. It was at the end of the four hundred and thirtieth year of the sojourning of the children of Israel in Egypt, on the fifteenth day of the first month, that they departed from Egypt. And they journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, numbering about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. They took with them, silver, gold, and raiments, and a heavy train of cattle. And of the dough which they had taken with them, they baked unleavened cakes, for they could not tarry, neither had they prepared any provision for themselves. Moses also took the bones of Joseph with him, as he had conjured the children of Israel to do, when the Lord should redeem them from Egypt.

VIII. PHARAOH PURSUES THE ISRAELITES. THEIR PASSAGE THROUGH THE RED SEA.

"O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things; his right hand and his holy arm have gotten him the victory." Psalm xcviii. 1.

The children of Israel journeyed from Succoth to Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord led before them by day a pillar of a cloud, to conduct them the right way; and by night a pillar of fire, to give them light. But Pharaoh and his servants regretted that they had suffered the Israelites to depart. They said to the people, What have we done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?

And Pharaoh took chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, with their captains. The Egyptians pursued the Israelites, with chariots, horsemen, and foot; and they overtook them encamping by the sea. When the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and saw the Egyptians pursuing them, they were sore afraid, and cried to the Lord. But Moses said to the people, Fear ye not; stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show you this day; for as ye have seen the Egyptians this day, ye shall never see them again:

the Lord shall fight for you, but ye hold your peace.[1] The Lord said to Moses, Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward; but lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, and part it asunder; and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground, through the midst of the sea. And the angel of God, who had gone before the camp of Israel, removed, and went behind them, and the pillar of the cloud came between the camp of the Egyptians and that of the Israelites. To the former it was a cloud and darkness, while to the latter it gave light by night; so the one camp came not near the other all the night. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. The children of Israel went in the midst of the sea on dry ground, and the waters were to them as a wall on their right hand and on their left. The Egyptians pursued them, and went in after them, all the horses of Pharaoh, his chariots and horsemen, into the midst of the sea. And it was in the morning watch that the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and threw their camp into confusion. And he caused the wheels to separate from the chariots, so that they went on heavily. Then said the Egyptians one to another, Let me flee from before Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them. But the Lord said to Moses, Stretch out thy hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the people of Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. Moses did so: and towards the morning the sea returned to its former strength; and as the Egyptians fled towards it, the Lord overthrew them in the midst of the sea. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians. And Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. When Israel saw the great power which the Lord had exercised upon the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and believed in him, and in his servant Moses. And Moses and the children of Israel sang a song of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, saying,

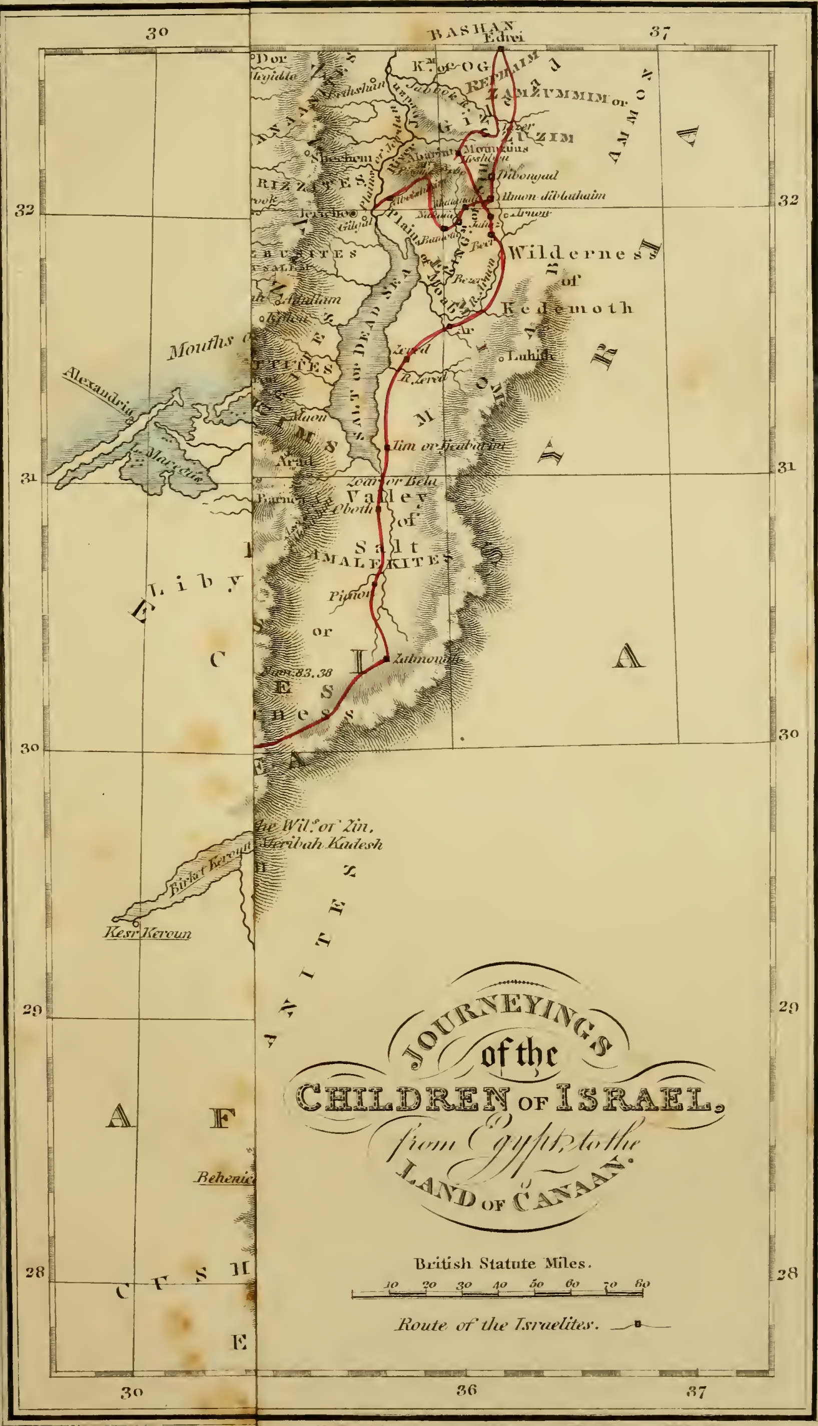
I WILL sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously;
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.
My strength and song is the Lord,
He is become my salvation:

[1] That is, confide ye in God in silent submission. Thus, too, says the Psalmist, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass." Psalm xxxvii. 5.

He is my God, I will praise him;
My father's God, I will exalt him.
Thy right hand, O Lord, glorious in power;
Thy right hand, O Lord, crusheth the enemy.
The enemy said, I will pursue,
Will overtake, and divide the spoil;
My desire shall be satisfied upon them:
I will unsheathe my sword,
My hand shall destroy them.
Thou didst blow with thy wind,
The sea covered them;
They sank as lead
In the mighty waters.
Who is like unto thee among the Mighty?
Lord, who is like unto thee?
Glorious in holiness,
Awful in praise, doing wonders!
Thou stretchedst out thy right hand,
The earth swallowed them.
Thou dost lead in thy mercy
This people, whom thou hast redeemed;
Whom thou guidest by thy strength,
Unto the habitation of thy sanctity.
Thou shalt bring them, and plant them
In the mountain of thine inheritance,
Prepared for thy throne,
Which thou, O Lord, hast made;
The sanctuary, O Lord,
Which thy hands have established.
The Lord shall reign
For ever and ever.

At the same time, Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron and Moses, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam responded to their song, saying,

Sing ye unto the Lord,
Who hath triumphed gloriously;
The horse and his rider
Hath he thrown into the sea.



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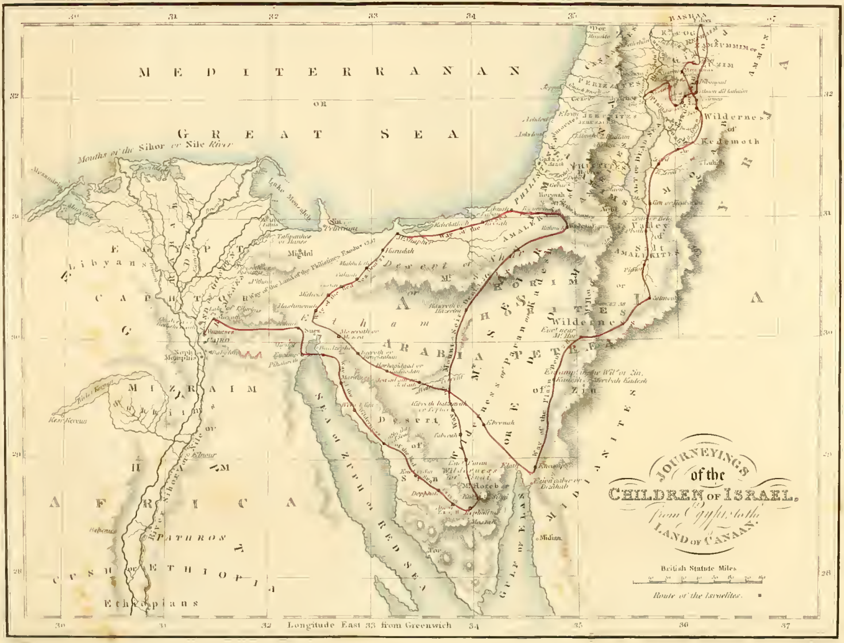
MEDITERRANEAN
OR
GREAT SEA
Mouths of the Sihor or Nile River
Lake Menzaleh
Migdol
Libyans
CAPHTORIM
MIZRAIM
AFRICA
PATHROS
CUSH or ETHIOPIA
Ethiopians
Suez
Cairo
Memphis
Desert of Etham
ARABIA PETREA
Wilderness
Wilderness of Zin
Desert of Sin
Mt. Horeb
SEA of ZUPH or RED SEA
GULF OF ELANA
Elath
Midian
MIDIANITES
AMALEKITES
Valley of Salt
Wilderness of Kedemoth
AMMON
BASHAN
JOURNEYINGS of the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, from Egypt to the LAND OF CANAAN.
British Statute Miles
Route of the Israelites.
Longitude East 33 from Greenwich

IX. GOD FEEDS THE ISRAELITES IN THE DESERT WITH MANNA AND QUAILS, AND CAUSES WATER TO SPRING FORTH FOR THEM OUT OF THE ROCK.

If thy feet rest on the Sabbath,
If your pursuits cease on my holy day:
If thou call the Sabbath a delight of the soul,
Quite consecrated to the sanctity of God,
Consecrated by rest from business.
If the soul abandon idle wishes,
And the mouth discontinue vain talk;
Then shalt thou delight in the Lord,
Elevated by him above all the heights of this earth,
And shalt enjoy the entire heritage of Jacob thy father:
Thus speaketh the mouth of the Lord.

Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.

SPECIAL SANCTIFICATION AND DISTINCTION OF THE SABBATH.

Moses led the children of Israel from the Red Sea into the wilderness. Here they murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said, We shall die of hunger in the wilderness. But the Lord said unto Moses, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel; speak to them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God. And behold, at evening, a multitude of quails came up, and covered the camp; and in the morning the dew lay round about the camp. And when the dew was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there was some fine substance, like small grain, which lay on the ground like hoar-frost. The children of Israel knew not what it was. And Moses then said to them, This is the food which the Lord hath given you to eat. But this is the thing which the Lord hath commanded in sending it, Gather of it, every man according to the number of persons in his tent: the children of Israel did so. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning;[1] when some of them, notwithstanding, left of it until the morning, it bred worms, and was tainted. And Moses was wroth with them. On the sixth day they had gathered a double quantity for each person. When, therefore, the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses, he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, A sabbath (day of rest), a holy sabbath is to-morrow;

[1] In order to train them to repose confidence in their invisible benefactor, the Lord, who would feed them to-morrow, as he fed them to-day.

therefore, he giveth you on the sixth day food for two days. Whatever food you would prepare, prepare it to-day; and that which remaineth, lay it up to be kept until the morning. Six days ye shall gather it, but the seventh is a day of rest, in honour of the Lord. To-day ye shall find nothing in the field; abide ye every man in his place: so the people rested on the seventh day. The children of Israel called the food Manna: it was like coriander-seed, white; and its flavour was like cake made with honey. And they did eat Manna forty years, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

The children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, and continued their marches according to the commandment of the Lord. They encamped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink, wherefore the people did chide with Moses; but he said unto them, Why chide ye with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord? And Moses prayed to the Lord. And the Lord said to him, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod wherewith thou smitedst the river, take in thy hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. Moses did so in the sight of the elders, and the people did drink.

X. THE ARRIVAL OF JETHRO, WITH HIS DAUGHTER ZIPPORAH, AND HER SONS.

"The fool thinketh his way the best; the wise man followeth the counsel of others." Prov. xii. 15.

When Jethro, the priest of Midian, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for his people Israel, in bringing them out of Egypt, Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, and her two sons, Gershon and Elieser, and went to Moses, where he encamped at the mount of God. And he had his arrival announced to Moses, who went to meet his father-in-law, bowed down before him, and kissed him. They inquired each after the other's welfare, and they came into the tent. And Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh, and unto the Egyptians, for Israel's sake; and all the troubles they had encountered on the way, and how the Lord had delivered them. Jethro rejoiced at all the

good which the Lord had done to Israel, and said, Blessed be the Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hand of Pharaoh, and of the Egyptians. Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods. Jethro offered up to the Lord burnt-offerings and sacrifices; and Aaron came, with all the elders of Israel, to hold a repast with the father-in-law of Moses before God. On the following morning, when Jethro saw how Moses sat to judge the people from morning unto evening, he said to Moses, The thing that thou dost is not good; thou wilt surely be weary, thou as well as the people; the thing is too heavy for thee to perform alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee. Select thou from amongst the people honest and able men, who are devoted to truth and hate covetousness. Place these over the people, to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And let them judge the people at all seasons; at the same time, let them bring every great matter unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge themselves; so shall it be easier for thyself, they bearing the burden with thee. But be thou unto the people to God-ward; thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that it behoveth them to do. Moses followed the advice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said. And Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he returned to his own land.

XI. REVELATION ON SINAI. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

"Come ye, O house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the Lord." Isa. ii. 5.

In the third month, from the departure of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, on the first day of the month, they came into the wilderness of Sinai, and encamped opposite to the mountain. Moses ascended the mount unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, and said, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians; I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself; now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation: these are the words which thou shalt tell the children of Israel. Moses reported these words to the elders of the people, and all the people answered together, and said,

All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, let them sanctify themselves, to-day and to-morrow, and cleanse their garments, so that they may be ready against the third day; for on the third day, the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people, upon mount Sinai. And Moses ordered the people to sanctify themselves, and they cleansed their garments. And it came to pass on the third day, when the morning arose, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and a very loud sound of the cornet was heard, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. Moses brought forth the people out of the camp towards God; and they stood at the nether part of the mountain. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And God spake all these words, saying,

I. I am the Lord thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.[1]

II. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any image, or any likeness of that which is in heaven above, or on the earth below, or in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them:[2] for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation, of them that hate me;[3] but

[1] The first divine favour which Israel had seen and experienced was the redemption from slavery; and this act of grace performed for them constituted their vocation to be the people of God. The first commandment, "I am," &c. was therefore intended to establish and to confirm the belief in the Almighty and All-bountiful Being, who rewards good actions and punishes the bad; who promises and performs, and in whose power it is to accomplish all that he will do: this commandment thus forms the basis of the succeeding laws and prohibitions, and serves as an introduction to them.

[2] That is, not to believe in them, or to consider them as having any power. This prohibition thus comprehends every erroneous belief in the influence which any supernatural power whatever, besides that of the one God, can exercise over the material world. Hence every species of superstition is to be looked upon as idolatry, and as equally sinful. To ensure the weal and the happiness of mankind, apostacy from God is thus strictly prohibited. Like the affectionate father, who, wishing the happiness of his children, warns them, under threat of severe punishment, to avoid faults.

[3] That is, those who intentionally and wantonly imitate the crimes of their parents.

showing mercy unto the thousandth generation of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not utter the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not leave unpunished him who shall utter His name in vain.[1]

IV. Remember at all times the sabbath-day, to keep it holy.[2] Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath, in honour of the Lord thy God: thou shalt not do any work, neither thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; wherefore, the Lord blessed the sabbath-day, and declared it holy.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother;[3] that thy days may be prolonged upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt not commit murder.[4]

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.[5]

[1] For, the careless and callous enunciation of the holy name of the Most High shows a want of respect, and derogates from the veneration due at all times to the Omnipresent. This prohibition teaches still more emphatically with how much care and reverence we should utter the name of God in taking an oath. We ought to reflect what a great sin, what a double wickedness he is guilty of, who calls God to witness in giving doubtful, uncertain, or perhaps even untrue evidence. Therefore, it is here expressly said, "For the Lord will not leave unpunished him who utters His name in vain" (that is, without necessity or duty, in a wicked or careless manner).

[2] This by no means implies a mere cessation from labour, or a distinction of this day by more savoury viands and better garments, for such sensual gratifications are frequently indulged in on week-days; but we are commanded to keep the sabbath *holy*. This implies a spiritual celebration; that is, we should sanctify our mind by means of self-examination; edify our heart by devotion; and by listening to the word of God, strengthen our will with a view to our moral improvement; and, lastly, we should seriously reflect on the existence, destiny, dignity, and duty of man. Bodily rest and external observances are the means, but our spiritual elevation is the end of the sanctification of the sabbath.

[3] Not only by external marks of honour, and by proofs of filial attachment and respect, but also, and indeed chiefly, by a moral and dignified conduct generally, so that it may be said of thee, This child does honour to his parents (or to those who act as their substitutes); and such conduct comprehends all the duties of children.

[4] This prohibition comprises suicide as well as murder, direct as well as indirect, such as may be committed by afflicting our neighbour, neglecting the sick, and the like.

[5] This prohibition teaches the sanctity of the matrimonial state in the widest sense. Constant and unshaken fidelity, the mutual esteem and confidence of husband and wife, are the best means to ensure the observance of this holy law; and *domestic happiness*, the greatest bliss on earth, is the never-failing happy result of such observance.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.[1]

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house;[2] thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

And all the people perceived the sounds of thunder, the noise of the trumpet, and the smoking mountain: and the people trembled, and stood afar off. They said to Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die. Moses said to the people, Fear not; for God is only come to prove you, and that his fear may be upon your faces, that ye sin not. The people thus stood afar off, but Moses drew near unto the dark cloud where God appeared. And the Lord said to Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye now have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven: ye shall not make, to place beside me, gods of silver, or gods of gold; an altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and thereon thou shalt sacrifice thy burnt-offerings and thy peace-offerings: in all places, where I shall cause my name to be recorded, I will come unto thee, and bless thee. And Moses told this unto the children of Israel.

[1] To steal, implies every species of appropriation in a clandestine or in any other unlawful manner; in short, every appropriation without the consent of the rightful possessor. He, therefore, who takes any thing from his parents, sisters, friends, schoolfellows, &c., without the permission or knowledge of the owner, be it food, money, or any other object, of however trifling a value, is guilty of theft, equally with him who commits that crime by breaking into the house at night, or by stealth in the day. Every kind of fraud may also be called a theft. Lastly, it need scarcely be added, that it makes no difference, and is equally sinful, from *whom* we steal, whether he be our co-religionist or not, a stranger or our fellow-citizen, for the law speaks in the broad terms, "Thou shalt not steal."

[2] By this prohibition we must not understand the inward desire or longing for any object, for this is natural and inherent in our disposition, and can therefore not properly be interdicted; but this probibition implies, "Thou shalt not suffer the rising desire to *continue;* thou shalt not foster it, nor allow it to grow dominant; but thou shalt at once suppress it, and banish it from thy heart." Thy neighbour possesses a beautiful field, or a beautiful house, or beautiful furniture, or the like; thou admirest it much, and art desirous of having it; but the possessor holds it equally dear and valuable. Thy desire grows strong, and becomes covetousness. Thou neither canst nor darest take possession of the desired object in an unlawful manner: this, the laws of man, and, perhaps, the fear of sin, forbid. Thou now contrivest other means, which appear to thee much less unjust; such as persuasion, or payment above the value, &c. At length thou gainest thy object; but the owner painfully feels the loss of his property, and he regrets having yielded to thy persuasion. Behold, now, thou hast done an injury

XII. CONTINUATION OF DIVINE LAWS AND ORDINANCES.

DUTIES TOWARDS OUR FELLOW MEN.

"Have we not *all* one father? Hath not one God created us? Wherefore then shall the brother deal treacherously against the brother." Mal. ii. 10.

AMONGST the laws and ordinances which Moses, by the command of God, set before the children of Israel, there were also the following: He that smiteth his father or his mother, shall be put to death. He that curseth his father or his mother, shall be put to death. He who sacrificeth unto another being, save unto the Lord only, shall have forfeited his life. Thou shalt not afflict (by words), nor oppress the stranger,[1] for ye were yourselves strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not oppress the widow and the orphan; but if thou do afflict them, and they cry unto me, I will surely hear their cry: and my wrath shall be kindled, and I will let you die by the sword, so that your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. If thou lend money to any of my people, that is to the poor by thee, be not to him as one who exacteth a debt, and tax him not with interest. If thou take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him at sunset; for it may be his only covering; it is, perhaps, his raiment for his naked body; wherein now shall he sleep? If, therefore, he cry unto me, I will hear him, for I am full of compassion. Ye shall be holy men unto me. Ye shall not eat the flesh of any animal torn in the field. Entertain not a false report. Join not the wicked in being a witness in an unjust cause. Do not follow the multitude to do evil. If thou givest thine opinion in a cause, do not incline to the multitude, to pervert justice. Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause. If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him. If thou see the ass of thine enemy

to thy fellow creature; thou hast disturbed the tranquillity of his life, and, at the least, committed an immoral act (compare the story of Naboth and Ahab, 1 Kings xxi). Thy neighbour has a good, diligent servant; thou wouldst like to engage him in thy services. Straightway to go and take him, thou deemest unjust; but thy wish might seduce thee to resort to other means, of a seemingly less culpable nature, whereby to gain possession of him. We must therefore endeavour rightly to comprehend the deep import of this divine law, and be ever mindful of it, in order that every unlawful desire may be stifled as soon as it springs up within our breast.

[1] That is, the non-Israelite.

sinking under his burden, beware of standing aloof; but thou shalt surely assist him in unloading. Thou shalt not wrest the right of the poor in his cause. Keep thee far from a false matter, and take no bribes; for the bribe blindeth the acute, and perverteth the words of the righteous. Oppress not a stranger; ye know how a stranger feeleth, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt.

XIII. THE CONSECRATION OF THE COVENANT, AND THE TWO TABLETS OF THE LAW.

"He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make it known to their children." Psalm lxxviii. 5.

And when Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments, the whole nation answered with one voice, and said, *All the words which the Lord hath said will we do.* Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, rose up early in the morning, erected an altar at the foot of the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent the young men of the children of Israel, namely, the first-born; they offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. Moses took half of the blood, and put it in a bason; but the other half he sprinkled on the altar. He then took the book of the covenant, and read it in the audience of the people. They said, All that the Lord hath said will we do. Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, This is the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words. And the Lord said to Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and stay here; and I will give thee the tables of stone, with the law and commandments, which I have inscribed thereon, to instruct the people. Moses ascended the mount, and the cloud covered it: for the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai, and the appearance thereof was like devouring fire in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, ascended the mount, and remained there forty days and forty nights.

XIV. THE ISRAELITES COMMIT THEMSELVES BY MEANS OF THE GOLDEN CALF.

"Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." Hos. xiv. 1.

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said to him, Up, make us divine beings,[1] that shall go before us (that is, lead us); for Moses, who brought us up out of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And Aaron said unto them, Take the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold out of their hands, fashioned it into a form,[2] and made a molten calf of it. And they said, These are thy gods, O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. They rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt and peace-offerings; the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose from the repast to indulge in mirth and sport. Meanwhile, Moses came down from the mount, having the two tables of testimony in his hand, and the writing of God, graven upon the tables. Joshua, the servant of Moses, heard the noise of the people as they shouted. He said to Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. But Moses replied, I hear the voice of them that sing with responses. And when he came nigh unto the camp, and saw the calf and the dancing, he grew angry, cast the tables out of his hands, and broke them beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, burnt it in the fire, ground it to a fine powder, and mixed it with the water, which he made the children of Israel drink. And Moses placed himself at the gate of the camp, and exclaimed, He who is faithful to the Lord, let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi rallied around him. He said unto them, Thus saith the Lord,

[1] That is, corporeal mediators, instead of Moses, between the highest Deity and ourselves. Influenced by the bad example (how corrupting it is!) of idolatry and superstition, which for centuries they had had before their eyes, while in Egypt, such vicious practice still continued the prevailing habit with them.

[2] He fashioned it in their presence, probably to show them that the metal was but material and impotent; probably, also, by the necessary preparations he wished to delay the matter, until his brother, whom he shortly expected, should return.

the God of Israel, Put every man his sword on his side, go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay some man his brother, some man his friend, and some man his relation. And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. The Lord also sent a plague amongst the people, because of the calf which they made Aaron make for them. On the morrow, Moses said to the people, Ye have committed a great sin; I now will go up unto the Lord, peradventure I may obtain pardon for you. And Moses besought the Lord, and said, O Lord, do not consume thy people, which, by thy greatness, thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt. Remember thy servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Turn not to the perverseness and transgression of this people; and forgive them, thou, who art gracious and merciful. The Lord pardoned them, and averted the evil, which he had intended to inflict upon them.

XV. THE NEW TABLES.

SUPERIOR PROPHETICAL DIGNITY OF MOSES.

"The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and great in mercy. He doth not deal with us after our sins, nor doth he reward us according to our iniquities." Psalm ciii. 8, 10.

And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of Assembly. Whoever sought instruction from the Lord, went out unto the Tabernacle of Assembly, which was without the camp. And when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, all the people rose up; every one remained standing at the door of his tent, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. As soon as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and *the Lord* spoke with Moses. When the people saw the cloudy pillar at the door of the tabernacle, they rose up, and every one prostrated himself at the door of his tent, and worshipped. And the Lord communed with Moses, face to face,[1] as a man communeth with his friend. Moses then returned unto the camp; but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, who attended him as a young man, never departed from the

[1] That is, Moses received a clear revelation.

tabernacle. And Moses said unto the Lord, If I have found grace in thy sight, teach me thy ways, that I may know thee, and continue to find grace in thy sight. And he moreover said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. But the Lord said to Moses, I will make all my goodness pass before thee,[1] and I will proclaim before thee by the name of the Lord; how I am gracious to whom ever I will be gracious, and show mercy unto him to whom I will show mercy. And the Lord further said, Thou canst not see my face; for no man shall see me and live.[2] But there is a place by me upon the rock; there thou shalt see my back,[3] but my face cannot be seen.

The Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone, like unto the first; and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. Be ready with them in the morning; for to-morrow thou shalt ascend the Mount Sinai, and expect me there at the top of the mount. Moses hewed two tables of stone, like unto the first, rose up early in the morning, went up to the mount, as the Lord had commanded him, and took with him the two tables of stone. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord is unchangeably the Eternal Being, an almighty God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and of infinite goodness and truth. He preserves his mercy even to the thousandth generation, and forgiveth iniquity, transgression, and sin; yet will he by no means clear the guilty, but will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and the fourth generation. Moses hastened, bowed his head towards the earth, and worshipped. And he continued with the Lord upon Mount Sinai forty days and forty nights; he neither eat bread, nor drank water. And the Lord wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, namely, the ten commandments. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the tables of testimony in his hand, the children of Israel beheld the face of Moses, and saw

[1] That is, I will make known to thee my ways, my superior attributes.

[2] Even the chief prophet, Moses, was not permitted to behold God in His highest glory; this the Lord taught him. As long as the human soul is wrapped in its mortal coil, she cannot enjoy a clear and distinct perception of God; only after having quitted her earthly abode, and being worthy of the highest felicity, she will, in the life which is to come, and to last for ever, participate in this delight.

[3] That is, in a figurative sense, Thou canst know me only by my works, attributes, and operations in nature.

that it shone; and they were afraid to come nigh. But Moses put a veil on his face, as long as he spoke with the people; and he took the veil off whenever he went in to speak with the Lord.

XVI. THE TABERNACLE OF ASSEMBLY.

The external service of God tends to elevate the heart to devotion; hence the regulations for the external adornment of the tabernacle, as a means to inspire such as are more sensual in their ideas.

Moses spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel as follows: Thus hath the Lord commanded me to tell you, Take from what is yours an offering unto the Lord; whatever your heart prompts you to give, bring ye an offering; gold, silver, and copper;[1] blue, purple, and scarlet wool, and fine linen, and goats' hair; rams' skins dyed red; skins of techashim, and shittim-wood; oil for the light, and spices for anointing-oil and for incense; shoham stones, and precious stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastplate, to be worn by the high priest, as holy garments. And all artificers amongst you shall come, and do what the Lord hath commanded. For thus saith the Lord your God, Ye shall erect me a sanctuary, and I will dwell amongst you. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the vessels thereto belonging, even so shall ye make it. The tabernacle, the tent and its covering, its taches, its boards, its bars, its pillars, and their silver sockets; the ark, overlaid with pure gold, with the staves thereto and its golden covering, with ornaments of cherubim; the curtain to divide between the holy and the most holy; the table, the staves, and all its vessels of pure gold, and the shewbread; the candlestick of pure gold, its vessels and the lamps thereof, and the oil; the altar of gold for incense, and the altar for burnt-offerings, with the staves and vessels thereof; the hangings for the tabernacle-door of twined linen, the pillars with their

[1] Every one, without exception, the poor as well as the rich, was to contribute to the house of God; and this they did, every one, according to his means. Skilful men and youths furnished work; women and maidens spun the fine goats' hair, the wool and the flax for embroidery work, and parted with their mirrors of polished metal for the priestly service. This shows us the universal and lively interest which the Israelites took in the sanctuary that was to be erected, and their sincere sentiments of piety, at a time when thy were totally without knowledge, and without external culture.

sockets of brass, and the hanging for the gate of the court; the pins of the tabernacle, and of the court round about; lastly, the packing-cloths for service in the sanctuary, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, in which to perform their priestly service. The children of Israel did according as the Lord had commanded them, through Moses. And they came, every one whose heart urged him, and whose disposition prompted him, and brought an offering to the Lord, according as he was able. Skilful women spun with their hands, and brought that which they had spun of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet wool, and of fine linen. Thus the children of Israel brought, every man and every woman, a voluntary offering to the Lord, for the holy work which the Lord had commanded, through Moses, to be done. And Bezaleel, of the tribe of Judah, and Aholiab, of the tribe of Dan, and other skilful artizans, wrought all the work of the sanctuary, for holy service: for the Lord had endowed Bezaleel and Aholiab with skill in their art, and put into their hearts the gift of teaching, and filled them with understanding and knowledge to do all the works of the master and of the ingenious artizan, as well as of the embroiderer and engraver. When all the work for the tabernacle and the garments was done, as the Lord had commanded, they brought it before Moses, and Moses blessed them.

On the first day of the first month, in the second year from the departure out of Egypt, the tabernacle was erected. When the tabernacle was reared up, with its boards, its sockets, its bars, and its pillars, and the tent spread over it, Moses took the testimony (the tables of the commandments), put it into the ark, covered it, and brought the ark into the tabernacle; he also drew the veil before it, to separate between the holy and the most holy. And he placed the table in the Tabernacle of Assembly, northward, without the veil. The candlestick he put opposite to the table, southward, and lighted its seven lamps before the Lord. And he put the golden altar for sweet incense before the veil in the tabernacle; but the altar for burnt-offering he put by the door of the tabernacle of the tent. And he set the brass laver between the tabernacle and the altar, and put water into it for washing. And Moses, and Aaron and his sons, washed their hands and their feet thereat, when they went into the Tabernacle of Assembly. And he arrayed his brother Aaron with the holy garments, as follows: the ephod

of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet wool, and of fine twined linen, and shoulder pieces for it, upon which they put two shoham stones, inclosed in ouches of gold; and upon each stone was engraven a name of a tribe of Israel, six upon each stone, as a memorial. Moreover, the breastplate, in which were set four rows of stone, twelve stones, according to the number of the children of Israel, engraved as upon a signet, every one according to its name, upon the twelve stones. Then, also, the robe of the ephod, with golden bells and pomegranates upon the hem round about, so that the sound of the priest should be heard, on his going into the sanctuary, for the performance of his office, and on his going out. And the coat, and the mitre of fine linen; also, the girdle, wrought in blue and red needlework; finally, the plate of the holy crown, of pure gold, to be fastened on high upon the mitre, with the writing engraved thereon, "*Holy to the Lord.*" Moses also erected the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and put up the hanging of the court gate.

When Moses had finished the work, the cloud covered the Tabernacle of Assembly, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward, in all their journeys; but when the cloud was not taken up, they journeyed not, till it was taken up: for the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and by night a fire was on it, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES.

ספר ויקרא

Dec. 15. 1855.

I. REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE SACRIFICES.

To practise virtue and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

THE Lord called unto Moses, and spoke unto him out of the Tabernacle of Assembly, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say to them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, ye may bring your offering of the cattle or of the flock; but it must be without blemish. If it be an offering of fowls, let it be turtle-doves, or young pigeons. You may also offer meat-offerings, of fine flour and oil; but ye shall not suffer salt to be wanting, and with all your offering you shall offer salt. But neither leaven nor honey shall ye burn in any offering to the Lord made by fire. And if any one bring a sin-offering, as an acknowledgment of his guilt, let him first confess his sin; and then he may offer, as a sin-offering, a sheep or a lamb: but if his means do not suffice, let him bring two turtle-doves; and if he be not able to bring them, let him bring an ephah of fine flour, without oil and without any frankincense. The priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be pardoned. And if a person sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, by lying unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in any thing taken away by violence, or by deceiving his neighbour, or if he have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doth, sinning therein, then it shall be, because he hath sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found, or all that about which he hath sworn falsely, he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, as soon as he acknowledgeth his guilt. Then he shall offer a ram, as a trespass-

offering, to the Lord; the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord, and thus he shall be pardoned.[1]

II. CONSECRATION OF AARON AND HIS SONS TO THE PRIESTLY SERVICE. ACCEPTANCE OF THE OFFERING. DEATH OF NADAB AND ABIHU.

Moses took anointing-oil and blood from the altar, sprinkled thereof upon Aaron, upon his garments, also upon his sons and upon their garments, whereby he consecrated Aaron and his garments, and his sons and their garments, to the holy service. He then spoke to Aaron and his sons, saying, Ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle until the days of your consecration are at an end; for seven days shall your consecration last: for thus hath the Lord charged me to command you. Aaron and his sons did all that the Lord had commanded through Moses. And on the eighth day, when Aaron and his sons had brought all the sacrifices to the Lord, and had proceeded with them, as Moses had commanded them, Aaron lifted up his hands towards the people, and blessed them. Afterwards, Moses and Aaron came into the tabernacle there to worship; and when they came out, they blessed the people, and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord,—that is, from the inmost sanctuary,—and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat. All the people saw this, shouted, and fell on their faces. But the sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, had each taken his censer, put fire therein, and laid incense thereon; thus they offered *strange fire* before the Lord, *which he had commanded them not.* And a flame proceeded from the Lord, devoured them, and they died before the Lord. Moses

[1] Thus we see that repentance, confession, and restoration, are the only proper offerings of atonement, while the offerings of cattle and of meat are only considered as an external addition. And thus it is with our prayers, fasts and festivals, and with other external religious acts, as far as they may be looked upon as offerings of atonement (for there were oblations, vow—joy—peace—and thanks-offering, corresponding with our present prayers and festivals). We must first appease our own conscience, and conciliate our neighbour, before we can expect pardon from the Almighty. "For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifice, which is acceptable to thee, is a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalm li. 16, 17.

said to Aaron (who was afflicted thereat), This is it that the Lord hath spoken: In those that come nigh me I will be sanctified,[1] and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron was calmed.[2] Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel, the uncle of Aaron, and said to them, Come near, and carry your brethren from before the sanctuary, out of the camp. So they went near, and carried them on their coats, out of the camp, as Moses had said.

III. LAWS CONCERNING THE EATING OF THE FLESH OF ANIMALS.

Abstemiousness and cleanliness are means for our perfection.

THE Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, These are the beasts which ye may eat, among the quadrupeds on earth. Whatsoever amongst quadrupeds parteth the hoof, namely, that which is cloven-footed, and cheweth the cud, that ye may eat. That beast, now, which is cloven-footed, but doth not chew the cud, or that which cheweth the cud, but is not cloven-footed, ye shall not eat, it shall be unclean unto you. Of that which liveth in the water, you may eat whatever hath fins and scales; but whatsoever hath not fins and scales, of all that hath life in the water, shall be to you an abomination, ye shall not eat of its flesh. Of fowls ye shall not eat, but shall abominate the eagle, the ossifrage, the ospray, the vulture, the kite, the raven, the owl, the hawk, the cuckoo, the little and the great owl, the cormorant, the swan, the pelican, the gier-eagle, the stork, the

[1] That is, in the priests and ministers who superintend and officiate at public worship, and in all who are entrusted with the management of religious affairs.

[2] Let this ever remind us, that we should quietly resign ourselves to the will of God, and submit to his dispensations in confiding humility, consoling ourselves with the thought,—"The kind Father in heaven does every thing according to his infinite wisdom and love for the good of man." Aaron had lost two beloved sons, suddenly, and at once; there he beheld the pale corpses, in their white priestly robes, of those who but a few minutes before had been full of life and health, and engaged in the service of God. A woeful, painful spectacle for the tender father! But his superior brother gives him to understand,—"Thy sons have done wrong, in having performed their divine office with levity, and therefore the Lord has punished them;" for (says the Lord) "in those who come nigh to me I will be sanctified, and in the sight of all the people I will be glorified." And Aaron was silent. He finds comfort in his firm belief in the justice and mercy of God, and no further expression of woe escapes his lips, no sigh issues from his breast. He is calm, as behoves the truly religious man in the time of adversity.

heron, the lapwing, and the bat; these shall be unclean unto you, after all their kind. Every creeping fowl, that goeth upon all four, shall be an abomination to you. Ye shall eat no blood, for the blood is the life of all flesh; and ye shall not eat the life with the flesh. Nor shall ye eat the flesh of dead or torn animals, be it of fowls or of quadrupeds, it shall be an abomination unto you. I am the Lord your God, who hath brought you out of Egypt, to be honoured by you as your God. Ye must therefore be holy, for I am the Holy One. And you must make a difference between the clean and the unclean beast, between clean and unclean fowls; and ye shall not defile your souls with any beast, fowl, or creeping animal, which I have taught you to be unclean: I, the Lord your God.

IV. LAWS CONCERNING OUR DUTIES TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOUR.

SANCTIFICATION. DUTIES TOWARDS PARENTS. CHARITY AND BENEVOLENCE. JUSTICE. GENERAL LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR.

THE Lord further spoke to Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy. Ye shall fear every one his mother and his father, and observe my sabbaths, I, the Lord your God. And when ye reap your field, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field; neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. Thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and for the stranger; I, the Lord your God. Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. Ye shall not swear by my name falsely, and thereby profane the name of thy God: I, the Lord. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind,[1] but shalt fear thy God: I, the Lord. Wrong no one in judgment; respect not the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the

[1] In a figurative sense, "Not to curse the deaf," i. e. when thy neighbour is not present, and therefore hears not thy curses, or thy slander, and cannot defend himself. Thus, also, "Not to put a stumbling-block before the blind," means, thou shalt not deceive any one by false advice, as he is, as it were, blind in a matter, which he does not understand, and places his confidence in thee. Such conduct is known only to ourselves; but thou shalt fear the Lord, who searcheth the heart and the loins, and who will punish thy intentions if not pure.

wealthy; but thou shalt judge thy neighbour according to justice. Thou shalt not go about amongst thy people as a talebearer, neither shalt thou stand aloof when thy neighbour is in danger: I, the Lord. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou mayest rebuke thy neighbour (if he offend thee), but thou shalt not owe him a grudge. Thou shalt not avenge thyself, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people. *Love thy neighbour, as thou lovest thyself.* Thou shalt rise up before a hoary head. Thou shalt honour the face of an old man, and thereby evince the fear of the Lord. And if a stranger sojourn with thee, ye shall not oppress him. The stranger[1] that dwelleth with you, shall be unto you as one born amongst you; thou shalt love him as thou lovest thyself; for ye were also strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall commit no injustice in judgment, in mete-yard, in weight, or in measures. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have. I, the Lord your God, who have brought you out of the land of Egypt. Observe ye all my statutes, and all my judgments, and keep them: I, the Lord.

V. THE HOLY FESTIVALS OF THE ISRAELITES.

THE Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, The festivals of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, are the following: Six days every kind of work may be done, but the seventh is the highest day of rest, for a holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein; it is sabbath in honour of the Lord in all your dwellings.

Above all ye shall observe my sabbaths, for this is a sign of the covenant between me and you throughout your generations, in order that it shall be known that it is I, the Lord, who sanctify you. Observe ye, therefore, the sabbath, for the sabbath is holy unto you. Whosoever desecrateth the sabbath, he shall surely be put to death; for he who performeth any work on the sabbath, he shall be cut off from amongst his people. Six days work may be done, but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, a holy convocation, in honour of the Lord. Whosoever doth any work on the sabbath, he shall surely be put to death; wherefore the children of Israel shall observe the sabbath; to observe the sabbath throughout their generations,

[1] That is, the non-Israelite.

for a perpetual covenant. The sabbath shall be a sign for ever between me and the children of Israel; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and had attained his end.[1]

But these are the feasts of the Lord, on which ye shall proclaim a holy convocation, each in its time. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between the two evenings, the passover is brought, in honour of the Lord. On the fifteenth day of this month commenceth the feast of unleavened bread, in honour of the Lord.[2] Seven days ye shall eat unleavened bread. On the first and on the seventh day a holy convocation shall be proclaimed, and no work be done.

And when ye be come into the land, which I shall give unto you as an inheritance, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring an omer, of the first-fruits of your harvest, unto the priest. And he shall wave the omer[3] before the Lord, to obtain His grace for you. And ye shall count unto you from the morrow of the festival (of passover), from the day that ye brought the omer, seven complete weeks.[4] Unto the morrow, after the seventh week, shall ye number fifty days, and then bring a new meat-offering. It is the festival of the first-fruits, in honour of the Lord, on which ye shall proclaim a holy convocation, and not do any work. It shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings.

And on the first day of the seventh month shall ye have a day of rest, on which the cornet shall be blown as a memorial, and a holy convocation be proclaimed. Ye shall do no work on that day; it is a day of rest, a day of blowing the cornet, in honour of the Lord.[5]

[1] The celebration of the sabbath a sign of covenant of the Mosaic religion. That is, He saw the eternal order, and the wise arrangement of the works of creation accomplished.

[2] פסח Feast of Passover (vide above, p. 53), also called חג המצות, the feast of unleavened bread.

[3] Omer is the name of a measure. The ears (of wheat) to be offered are to contain an omer. This is the origin of the traditional law of the literal counting of the עומר, which takes place annually, commencing from the second evening of פסח, and continuing until the feast of weeks.

[4] חג השבעות, the feast of weeks, after the complete seven weeks; also called יום הבכורים, the feast of the first-fruits, because on that day the first produce of the general harvest was offered as a thanks-offering.

[5] In consequence of the subsequent arrangement of the calendar by our Rabbins, for the regulation of the new moons and months, this festival, which, from the same cause, is the new year's day (ראש השנה) is solemnized two days. According to the said calendar, we Israelites have a twofold year, viz. a

But on the tenth day of the seventh month, being the day of atonement, ye shall proclaim a holy convocation. On that day ye shall do no manner of work; for it is the day of atonement,[1] to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God. Whatever person that shall not fast in the same day, shall be cut off from amongst his people. And whatever person that doth any work in the same day, that person will I destroy from among his people. It shall be unto you a sabbath of the highest order, and ye shall fast; on the ninth day of the month, at even, shall ye commence, and from even unto even shall ye celebrate your sabbath. This shall be an everlasting statute unto you, in all your dwellings. For on that day an atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; from all your sins shall ye be clean before the Lord.

And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month is the *feast of tabernacles*,[2] for seven days, in honour of the Lord. On the first day shall be a holy convocation, and ye shall do no work therein; and on the eighth day shall again be a holy convocation, it is the concluding feast;[3] ye shall do no work therein. Thus shall ye celebrate the festival of the Lord from the fifteenth day: on the first day is a day of rest, and on the eighth day following another day of rest. And on the first day ye shall take you fruit from the tree Hadar (Esrog), branches of palm trees (called Lulav), a bough of the myrtle tree, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice with them before the Lord your God seven days.[4] It shall be to you a

biblically-religious, and a secular or work year. Nissan is the commencement of the former, and Tishri, the seventh according to the bible, that of the latter. This festival is also solemnized by special performances of devotion, being, according to tradition, the anniversary of the creation of the world, and the commencement of the ten penitential days.

[1] יום כפור, day of atonement.

[2] סכות; also called חג האסיף, being the time on which all the produce of the field and the vineyard was brought home.

[3] שמיני עצרת, and the ninth day, which, according to ancient custom (vide p. 79) we also solemnize, is called שמחת תורה, "Rejoicing in the Law;' because on that day, according to the customary regulation of divine service, the fifty-four weekly portions of the five books of Moses are concluded, and the reading of the Torah is recommenced.

[4] The import of the law, concerning the four productions of the country, to be used during divine service, cannot be mistaken. They are (similar to the offering of the Omer on the Passover) to be a sign of joyful thanks to the Lord, the Giver of all good, in order to heighten the solemnity of the harvest home, as the feast of tabernacles is also called; and more vividly to represent to our minds the goodness of God, while we pour forth our praise and thanksgiving to Him. But the special import of this commandment, and the reason why these four species

statute for ever in your generations. Ye shall also dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths; that your posterity may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I, the Lord your God.

Three times in the year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.[1] But they shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able, in proportion to the blessing which the Lord thy God shall have bestowed on thee. And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the festivals of the Lord.[2]

of plants must be thus joined, cannot, however, be equally well ascertained. In this respect, this ordinance ranks among those divine laws, which, besides their *primary* reason, have emblematical significations for their secondary object. Amongst the variety of explanations given by our sages on these four species of plants, the following appears to come nearest to the truth. The humble willow of the brook, joined to the beautiful fragrant myrtle, and these two again coupled with the slender and noble palm, and the still more odoriferous and savoury fruit of Hadar (Esrog), represent human society, showing, how the humble and the great, the wicked and the virtuous, the fool and the sage, the poor and the rich, live together in social union; how their very differences and imperfections cause them to assist each other, according to their various stations; and how the All-wise, Eternal Governor of the Universe, has thus established the social bond for the happiness and salvation of his children.

[1] These three festivals are commonly called שלש רגלים (three times), because this expression is *here* used in holy writ.

[2] To these also belong, in some respects, the new moon (ראש חודש), being distinguished by special offerings, besides the ordinary daily sacrifices (Numb. xxviiii), which distinction we observe in divine service, by reciting some additional psalms and prayers. Our Rabbins, in regulating the prayers for the festivals and solemn days, having had especial regard to the ordinances concerning the sacrifices, have distinguished the sabbath, as well as the other festivals, and the new moon (which, however, is a work day), by an additional prayer, called מוסף, Increase, Addition, on account of the law of the Torah, which prescribes an additional sacrifice on those days.

Observation. As it will be asked why we keep the passover eight days, the feast of weeks and the day of memorial two, and the feast of tabernacles nine days, and why we solemnize four whole days in the first and in the last of these festivals, while the Divine law commands us to keep sacred only the first and the seventh day of passover, one day of the feast of weeks, and day of memorial, and the first and eighth day of the feast of tabernacles, it is deemed necessary to offer the following explanation. The year of the Torah, by which the festivals are fixed, is, as already stated above (vide note, p. 52), a lunar year, of twelve lunar revolutions or new moons, and which together consist of three hundred and fifty-four days and some hours; the difference between this amount and that of the solar year is compensated for by the intercalary months. The month commences at the instant when the sun and the moon pass simultaneously through one and the same meridian, which phenomenon is called the renewal of the month, or Molad,

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES.

ספר במדבר

I. NUMBERING OF THE PEOPLE. THE TRIBE OF LEVI APPOINTED TO THE HOLY SERVICE. THE PRIESTLY BENEDICTION.

On the first day of the second month, in the second year from their departure out of Egypt, the Lord spoke unto Moses in the desert of Sinai, in the Tabernacle of Assembly, and said, Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families and houses, with their names, every male by their

(מולד). To ensure the correctness of the Molad, and in accordance with a passage in Holy Writ, the new moon was, in ancient times, computed to commence from the moment when the moon first became visible on the horizon. The beginnings of the months, and consequently also those of the festivals were therefore fixed by the spiritual council (Sanhedrim) in Jerusalem, the metropolis, according to authentic testimony, as to the *earliest* appearance of the new moon. This proceeding, however, was particularly inconvenient on the occasion of the new year's day, which is celebrated on the new moon of the month of Tishri, since the witnesses who had been deputed to observe the first appearance of the moon, often did not return until after the evening sacrifice; and the people could not tell whether the day was a holiday or not. Hence, it was arranged, that whenever the witnesses were delayed, both the day on which the Molad was announced, and the following one should be kept holy; and, as the people in the provinces could not in time ascertain whether such a delay had occurred in Jerusalem, the festival of the new year was there *always* celebrated two days. As to the other festivals, which fall on a later day in the month, there could never be any doubt in Jerusalem. But, it was different with the more distant places, whose inhabitants being removed from Jerusalem more than a ten days' journey, could not in due time learn the legal appointment of the new moon, and consequently that of the festivals. Now, in order to celebrate them simultaneously, that is, on the same day, with their brethren in Jerusalem, and with a view strictly to comply with the law, the inhabitants of those distant places were obliged to keep holy *two days* in each festival. From this rule, however, the day of atonement was excepted, as it would have been too heavy for the people to bear a two days' fast.

This regulation of celebrating two days instead of one, was retained, even after the introduction of the almanack, because the present method of calculation might one day cease to be practised; further, that the difference between the *real* renewal of the moon and her first appearance might be reconciled; and lastly, that all Israelites, under whatever latitude, might still continue to celebrate the festivals simultaneously with their brethren in Jerusalem. And this regulation, which in the successive periods of time, obtained the sanction of our spiritual guides, and was universally adopted and adhered to, has continued as a traditional ordinance down to our own days.

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polls. From twenty years old and upwards, all who can do service in Israel shall ye number, thou and Aaron, by their armies. Of each tribe one man shall assist you in this work; a man who is the head of his family. Moses and Aaron did so. And all that were numbered, from twenty years old and upwards, whatever in Israel was fit for service, were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty. But the Levites, after their families, were not numbered among them: for the Lord had said to Moses, Thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take their sum, among the children of Israel. But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it; they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle. And when the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when it is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up. Any stranger (non-Levite) that cometh nigh shall be put to death. For I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel, instead of all the first-born among the children of Israel, so that the Levites shall be mine. But the Levites shall minister unto Aaron and his sons. Under their superintendence the Levites shall do the service in the sanctuary, and Aaron and his sons shall regulate the service.

The Lord furthermore spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, Thus shall ye bless the children of Israel; these words shall ye address to them:

The Lord bless thee and keep thee.

The Lord make his countenance shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.

The Lord turn his countenance unto thee, and give thee peace.

Thus shall they pronounce my name over the children of Israel, and I will bless them.[1]

II. PUNISHMENT OF GREEDINESS. MOSES' PATIENCE.

"The pious eateth but to satisfy himself; but the wicked cannot get sufficient."
Prov. xiii. 25.

THE mixed multitude amongst Israel were full of greedy desires. And they caused the children of Israel to be likewise malcontent, so that they wept, and said, Would that flesh were

[1] This may be referred either to the priests or to the Israelites.

given to us to eat. We yet remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now we must starve, and have nothing save this manna. Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man at the door of his tent; and the Lord was greatly displeased, and Moses also was much grieved. The Lord said to Moses, Say thou unto the people, Be ye ready against to-morrow; ye shall have flesh to eat, for the Lord hath heard your weeping, and now will give you flesh to eat. Ye shall not eat it one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten nor twenty days; but even a whole month shall ye eat it, until it come out of your mouth, and be loathsome unto you; because that ye have despised the Lord, who is amongst you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt? Then Moses said, They are six hundred thousand footmen, amongst whom I am; and thou sayest, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, that it should be sufficient for them? And the Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lord's hand too short (i. e. his power too limited)? Now thou shalt see whether thou shouldst hold my word dear or not. Moses went and told these words unto the children of Israel. And at the command of the Lord he convened seventy men of the eldest of the people, and placed them round about the tabernacle. The Lord descended in a cloud, spoke unto him, took some of the spirit that was upon him, and put it upon the seventy elders. And as soon as the spirit rested upon them they prophesied; but no more than this once. Two of them remained in the camp; the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. Upon them also the spirit rested, for they were of those who were set down on the list; but they went not out unto the tabernacle, and they prophesied in the camp. A youth ran to report this unto Moses, saying, Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp. And Joshua, the son of Nun, from his youth the faithful servant of Moses, began and said, Moses, my lord, forbid them. But Moses answered him, Art thou envious for my sake? I wish that all the Lord's people would become prophets; that is, that the Lord would put his spirit upon them.[1] Hereupon Moses

[1] Here again, as on several other occasions, we learn how modest and how free from all selfishness was our divine teacher, Moses. He wished all the

returned with the elders of the congregation into the camp. And a wind proceeded from the Lord, brought quails from the sea, and scattered them around the camp, as it were, a day's journey on either side, about two cubits high upon the face of the earth. The people gathered them in large quantities, and eat of them. The flesh, however, was yet between their teeth, when the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a terrible plague. Hence the place was called, "The graves of greediness" (Kibroth Hattavah), because there they buried the greedy people.[1] Thence the people journeyed unto Hazeroth, and from Hazeroth they continued their journey, and rested in the wilderness of Paran.

III. THE SPIES. SAD CONSEQUENCES OF CALUMNY AND FALSEHOOD, AND THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF.

"The heart of the righteous reflecteth before it answereth; but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things." Prov. xv. 28.

Moses, with the permission of the Lord, sent twelve leading men, of each tribe one man, heads of the congregation, from the desert of Paran, to search the land of Canaan. And he said to them, View the land, how it is; the people that dwell therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or numerous; what land it is in which they dwell, whether it be good or bad; what cities they be in which they dwell, whether in open or fortified places; also, what soil it is, whether it be fat or lean; whether fruit-trees thrive therein or not. Be ye also of good courage to bring of the fruit of the land. It was just then about the time of the first ripe grapes; so they went up and searched the land; they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron. And when they came unto the valley of Eshcol, they cut down there a branch with one cluster of grapes, bore it between two upon a staff, and, moreover, took with them of the pomegranates and of the figs. After forty days they returned from the searching of the land. And they made their report to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation of Israel, and said,

Israelites were prophets, or so perfect and wise as no longer to require his guidance. Such magnanimity in sentiment and action, proves the pure, unalloyed sense of virtue in a man, as he thereby shows, that, agreeably to his higher vocation, the weal of his fellow men is the constant aim of all his actions.

[1] How many a sepulchre might even in our days be called "The grave of lust and greediness!"

The land, whither we were sent, is a land flowing with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. But the people that live therein are mighty; the cities are walled, and very great; and, moreover, we saw there the children of Anak (giants), in comparison with whom, we seemed, in our own sight, as grasshoppers. Thus they brought a false and unfavourable report of the country, and said, We must not venture to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.

All the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said, Would that we had died in the land of Egypt, or would that we die in this wilderness. Wherefore doth the Lord bring us unto that land where we shall fall by the sword? Our wives and our children will become a prey. Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they already said one to another, Let us choose a leader, and return into Egypt. Moses and Aaron fell on their faces. And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were of those that had searched the land, rent their garments. And they spoke unto all the congregation of Israel: The land, which we passed through to search it, is very excellent. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us. Only rebel ye not against the Lord, and ye need not fear the people of the land; we shall devour them like bread; their shade (i. e. their protection) is departed from them, and with us is the Lord; fear them not. But all the congregation said, They ought to be stoned; meanwhile, the glory of the Lord appeared in the Tabernacle of Assembly, unto all the children of Israel. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, after all the signs which I have shown among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and annihilate them; but of thee I will make a nation greater and mightier than they. And Moses entreated the Lord, and said, Let the greatness of thy power, O Lord, be shown, as thou hast spoken; the Lord is long-suffering, of infinite mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression. Pardon, now, I beseech thee, the iniquity of thy people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, as thou hast so often shown indulgence to this people, from Egypt, even until now. The Lord said, I pardon, according to thy word. But as truly as I live, and as the glory of the Lord filleth the whole

earth, all those men, who have seen my greatness and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and who have tempted me now these ten times, and would not hearken unto my voice, surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers; neither shall any of them that provoked me, see it. Only Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, they shall come into the land, because another spirit animated them, and they faithfully followed me. But unto the children of Israel thou shalt say, Thus speaketh the Lord: As ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you. In this wilderness shall ye fall, all that were numbered of you, from twenty years and upwards, who have raised complaints against me. But your little ones, of whom you said, they will become a prey, them will I bring in, that they shall see and know the land which ye have despised. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear the punishment of your faithlessness until your bodies shall have wasted in the wilderness. After the number of days in which ye searched the land, namely forty days, a year for each day, even forty years, shall ye atone for your iniquities, and know what it is when I withdraw my hand. And the men whom Moses had sent to search the land, and who had falsely brought an evil report thereof, died soon after by a plague, which the Lord sent upon them; only Joshua and Caleb remained alive. When Moses told the children of Israel all the words of the Lord, they mourned greatly. And they rose up early in the morning to ascend the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we are ready to go up to the place of which the Lord hath spoken, for we acknowledge that we have sinned. But Moses said, Wherefore should ye now again transgress the commandment of the Lord? Ye will not succeed. Go not up, lest ye be smitten before your enemies, for the Lord is not among you. Ye will there find the Amalekite and the Canaanite before you, and ye shall fall by the sword; for because ye are turned away from the Lord, he will not be with you. But they blindly insisted upon ascending the hill-top; meanwhile, however, the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.[1] Then the Amalekite and the Canaanite, who dwelt upon the mountain, came down, defeated them, and pursued them, even unto Hormah.

[1] That is, they did not join the expedition, since it was undertaken against the commandment of the Lord.

IV. REBELLION AND PUNISHMENT OF KORAH AND HIS ADHERENTS.

"Fear the Lord, O my son, and the king, and meddle not with (rebels) them that are given to change." Prov. xxiv. 21.

KORAH, the son of Izhar, of the tribe of Levi, together with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, of the posterity of Reuben, rose in rebellion. They appeared before Moses, with two hundred and fifty of the children of Israel, princes of the congregation, members of the council, men of renown. They assembled against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, Ye arrogate too much to yourselves. All the congregation is holy, for the Lord is among them; wherefore then do ye elevate yourselves above the congregation of the Lord? When Moses heard this, he fell upon his face. And he spoke unto Korah, and unto all his followers, saying, Even to-morrow the Lord will make known who is his, and who is so holy, that he may approach him; him whom he shall choose, he will allow to come near him. This do: Take censers, put fire therein, and incense upon it before the Lord to-morrow; and the man whom the Lord shall choose, he shall be holy. And Moses continued, and said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath singled you out from amidst the congregation, to bring you near to himself, to minister in the tabernacle of the Lord? and now ye covet the priesthood also. Take heed, thou and all thy adherents, who have rebelled against the Lord. And what of Aaron, that ye murmur against him? Moses sent for Dathan and Abiram; but they said, We will not come. Is it not enough that thou hast brought us up out of so good a land, to kill us in the wilderness, and wilt thou now even assume dominion over us? Moreover, thou hast not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards. And wilt thou now blind the eyes of these men? we will not come. And the two hundred and fifty men had taken their censers each, put fire and incense therein, and placed themselves at the door of the Tabernacle of Assembly, with Moses and Aaron. The Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto the congregation, saying, Remove from round about the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Moses went, and was

followed by the elders of Israel. And he addressed the congregation, and said, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye perish with them in the greatness of their sin. So they removed from round about the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; but the latter went out to the doors of their tents, together with their wives and their children, both great and small. Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works, and that I have not done them of my own mind: If these men die like other men, and if the fate of all men be decreed against them, then the Lord hath not sent me; but if the Lord produce something new, namely, that the earth open her mouth, and engulph them, with all that appertaineth to them, and that they sink into the pit alive, then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord. He had scarcely finished these words, when the ground under them parted asunder: the earth opened her mouth, and engulphed them, their families, all men belonging to Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit; the earth closed upon them, and thus they disappeared from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at their crying; for they thought the earth might swallow them up likewise. And a fire proceeded from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who had offered the incense.[1]

V. THE WATERS OF STRIFE. DEATH OF MIRIAM AND AARON.

"No man on earth is so righteous that he at all times doeth that which is good, and never committeth sin." Eccles. vii. 20.

THE people of Israel encamped in Kadesh. There Miriam died, and was buried. And there being no water for the congregation, they gathered themselves together against Moses

[1] Such was the fate of the rebels and their adherents. Holy writ here holds out to us an example, and teaches us, that rebellion against the constituted authorities, or opposition to the legitimate order of things, is highly culpable, and a sin equally against God and man:—against God, because the disturbance of order and peace is an immoral action, and is opposed to his holy will, which ordains and desires justice and equity upon earth; against man, because we thereby interrupt the tranquillity of social life, and generally injure or even ruin many innocent persons. But punishment is sure to meet him who commits such sin;—this the history of all nations and times teaches us.

and Aaron. And the people chid with Moses, and said, Would we had died when our brethren perished before the Lord. Why have ye conducted the people of the Lord into this wilderness, where we and our cattle must die? And wherefore have ye made us come out of Egypt, to bring us unto this wretched place, where we cannot sow, where there are neither fig-trees nor pomegranates, nay, where there is not even water to drink? Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle; they fell upon their faces, and the glory of the Lord appeared unto them. And the Lord spoke unto Moses, and said, Take the rod, and gather the congregation together, thou and thy brother Aaron, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, that it give forth its water; in this way thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock, and give the congregation and their beasts drink. Moses took the rod, which lay before the Lord, as he had commanded him. Moses and Aaron then caused the people to assemble before the rock; and Moses said to them, Hear now, ye rebels! Shall we procure water for you out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and smote the rock twice with his rod, and water came out abundantly, so that the congregation and their cattle had drink. But the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye had not confidence[1] in me to sanctify me in the eyes of the people, therefore ye shall not bring this people into the land which I have determined to give them. These are the waters of strife, where the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them.

The children of Israel journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto Mount Hor. Here the Lord spoke unto Moses and Aaron, saying, Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, for he shall not enter into the land which I give unto the children of Israel. Take, therefore, Aaron and his son Eleazar, and bring them up unto Mount Hor; and strip Aaron of his garments, and put

[1] The wise Mendelssohn explains this passage in the following manner: "Because the ordained pastors had not the undaunted courage to remain in the midst of the congregation, on their breaking out into rebellious murmurings, and by powerful remonstrances, to strengthen their confiding belief in the omnipotence and goodness of God; but, on the contrary, in a weak and timid spirit, repaired into the tabernacle, and did not reappear unto the people, until the Lord had commanded them to do so; therefore, they being holy men, who are accountable for the least transgression, this unbecoming conduct was accounted to them as a sin. Happy, however, the mortal whom the Lord shows no indulgence for such a transgression."

them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron shall be gathered to his people, and shall die there. Moses did as the Lord had commanded; and they went up unto Mount Hor, in the sight of all the congregation. Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died in the summit of the mountain, but Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount. All the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, and all the house of Israel mourned for him thirty days.

VI. THE POISONOUS SERPENTS. CONQUEST OF THE COUNTRIES OF SIHON AND OG.

"Come, let us turn again unto the Lord; he afflicteth and healeth us, he woundeth and bindeth up." Hos. vi. 1.

THE people of Israel again spoke against God, and against Moses, saying, Wherefore have ye brought us out of Egypt, to die in the wilderness? for there is neither bread nor water, and we loathe this poor food. But the Lord sent poisonous serpents (called Seraphim) among the people, that they should bite the people; and many of Israel died. Then the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, in speaking against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a seraph, and set it upon a pole for a sign; and whoever hath been bitten, let him look upon it, and he shall live. Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole for a sign. And it came to pass, that if any one had been bitten by a serpent, and he looked up to the serpent of brass, his life was saved.[1] Israel sent unto Sihon, king of the Amorites, with this message: Let me pass through thy land; we will not turn either into the fields nor into the vineyards; nor will we drink of the waters of the well; but we will go along by the highway until we be past thy borders. Sihon, however, would not suffer Israel to pass through his border; but he gathered all his people together, went to meet Israel in the wilderness, and attacked them. But Israel smote him with the edge of the sword (i. e.

[1] Upon this the Talmud ingeniously comments: What! can a serpent of brass kill, or give life? But, when Israel looked upwards to their heavenly Father,—when they prayed to him with a contrite heart,—when they waited for his mercy, and desisted from their wicked path, they were healed and recovered; but if not, they were wounded and perished.

defeated him), and conquered his country. Thus Israel took possession of all the cities of Amori, and settled therein. When they went up the way unto Bashan, Og, the king of Bashan, went out, with all his people, against them to battle. And the Lord said unto Moses, Fear him not; for I will deliver him, all his people and his whole country, into thy hand. So they defeated him, together with his sons, and all his people, till there was none left him alive; and conquered his country. And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab, on the Jordan, opposite to Jericho.

VII. BALAK AND BALAAM.

"The Lord is with me, I fear not. What can man do unto me?" Psalm cxviii. 6.

When Balak, the king of Moab, saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites, he began to be afraid of the children of Israel, so that he was distressed on their account. And he sent messengers to Balaam, the son of Beor, to Pethor, which is situated on the Euphrates, to invite him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt, covering the whole earth, as far as it can be seen, and they now abide over against me. Come now, therefore, and curse me this people, for they are too mighty for me; peradventure I shall then prevail, and drive them out of the land; for I know that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed. The elders of Moab, and the elders of Midian, departed together, came to Balaam, and delivered the message of Balak. He replied, Stay here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak unto me. Thus the princes of Moab remained with Balaam. And a divine Being appeared unto Balaam, and said to him, Do not go with them, neither curse thou the people, for they shall be blessed. Balaam having arisen in the morning, said unto the princes of Balak, Return ye into your land, for the Lord will not suffer me to go with you. So the princes of Moab rose up, came to Balak, and said, Balaam hath refused to come with us. And Balak again sent princes in greater number, and of a higher rank. They came to Balaam and said, Thus saith Balak, the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming to me; for I will show thee great honour, and whatsoever thou shalt say unto me I will do; only come and curse me this people. Balaam an-

swered, and said to the messengers of Balak, If even Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not transgress the command of the Lord my God, to do any thing small or great. However, tarry ye here also this night, that I may learn what the Lord will yet say unto me. The divine Being came unto Balaam at night, and said to him, If the men are come to call thee, thou mayest go with them; but whatever I shall tell thee, thou shalt do. And Balaam arose in the morning, saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. But the anger of God was kindled, because of his being so quickly resolved to depart;[1] and an angel of the Lord placed himself in the way, to obstruct his path. (Now Balaam was riding upon his ass, and two lads were with him). And the ass saw the angel standing in the way, with a drawn sword in his hand, and turned aside out of the way. Balaam struck her, to turn her again into the way. But the ass stepped between vineyards, and got into a narrow path, where there was no turning, either right or left. And she saw the angel, and fell down under Balaam, whereupon his anger was kindled, and he struck her with a staff. Meanwhile the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel standing in the way, with the drawn sword in his hand. He bowed down his head, and prostrated himself to the ground. And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore hast thou struck thy ass these three times? Behold, I went out to hinder thee, because thou hast been too precipitate in this detestable journey.[2] The ass saw me, and evaded me three times; had she not done so, I would surely have slain thee, and spared her. Balaam said unto the angel of the Lord, I have sinned, for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me; even now, therefore, if it displease thee, I will return. But the angel of the Lord said to Balaam, Thou mayest go with the men, but speak only what I shall tell thee. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak. When Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him in the frontier town of Moab. And he said to Balaam, Did I not earnestly send unto thee, to invite thee? wherefore didst thou refuse to

[1] Because he undertook his journey with a bad intent. God had indeed *given him leave* to go with the messengers, but he disapproved of the culpable purpose of Balaam, who, to please Balak, perhaps also bribed by the presents he was to receive, betook himself on a journey to *curse Israel.*

[2] "Lo, all these things worketh God twice and thrice with man; to warn him, to bring back his soul from the pit; to shine, in innocence, in the light of life." Job xxxiii, 29, 30.

come? Dost thou think I cannot honour thee? Balaam replied to Balak, Lo, I am come to thee, but is it now in my power to say what I would? Whatever God putteth in my mouth, that must I speak. In the following morning, Balak took Balaam, and conducted him into the heights of Baal, and thence showed him a portion of the people. Balaam said to Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen, and seven rams. And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram. Balaam said to Balak, Stay here by thy offering, and I will go; peradventure the Lord will come to meet me; and whatsoever he showeth me, I will tell thee. And he went up to the summit of the hill; and the Lord put an answer into the mouth of Balaam, and said, Return now unto Balak, and thus shalt thou speak. He returned unto him, and, lo, he was still standing by his offering, he, and all the princes of Moab. Balaam took up his parable, and said:

From Aram did Balak send for me,
Moab's king, from the mount of the east:
"Come," said he, "curse me Jacob;
"And, Come, defy me Israel."
Shall I curse, whom God doth not curse?
Shall I execrate, when the Lord doth not execrate?
I see him from the summit of the rock,
And behold him from the hills:
Lo, the people shall dwell alone,
And shall not be reckoned among the heathens.
Who shall count the dust of Jacob?
And the number of the fourth part of Israel?
O, that I might die the death of the righteous,
That my end might be like unto theirs!

Then said Balak to Balaam, What art thou doing unto me? I sent for thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou dost bless them! But he replied and said, Must I not faithfully speak whatsoever the Lord putteth in my mouth? Balak now took him to another place. And the Lord met Balaam, and put an answer in his mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and say thus. And Balaam took up his parable, and said:

Rise up, Balak, and hear;
Hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor:

God is not a man, that he should deceive;
Neither a son of Adam, that he should repent.
Should he speak, and not do it?
Promise, and not perform it?
I am commanded to bless;
He hath blessed, I cannot reverse it.
No calamity can be seen for Jacob,
No affliction for Israel:
The Lord his God is with him,
His royal residence is amidst him:
The Power, that brought them out of Egypt,
Hath the high-aspiring strength of a Reem:[1]
Enchantment succeedeth not against Jacob,
Nor the arts of divination against Israel.
In due time shall Jacob, shall Israel hear,
What the Lord hath wrought for them.

Balak conducted Balaam yet to another place, namely, to the summit of Peor, which commandeth a view of the desert. And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and beheld Israel encamped according to his tribes. The spirit of God came upon him; and he took up his parable, and said,

How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob!
Thy dwellings, O Israel!
Like brooks of long extent;
Like gardens by the river's side;
Like lign-aloes planted by the Lord;
Like cedars beside the water:
Water runneth out of his buckets,
His seed falleth upon a moist soil;
Mightier than Agag shall be his king,
And his kingdom shall be exalted.

Balak now was so angry, that he smote his hands together, and said to Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemy, and thou hast already blessed him three times! Hasten now, and return home; I thought to honour thee, but the Lord denieth thee honour. Balaam answered Balak and said, Did I not tell the messengers whom thou sent unto me, Though Balak were

[1] A very large and strong quadruped.

to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not transgress the command of God, to do either good or bad of my own mind; but what the Lord saith, that will I speak. Balaam rose up, and returned unto his place; and Balak also went his way.

VIII. THE TRIBES OF REUBEN, GAD, AND HALF THE TRIBE OF MANASSEH.

"Do not stand aloof when thy neighbour is in danger." Lev. xix. 16.

THE sons of Reuben, and the sons of Gad, had a very great multitude of cattle. They saw the countries of Jazer and Gilead, and found them convenient for pasturage. They, therefore, came and laid the following petition unto Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the princes of the congregation. The country this side Jordan, which the Lord smote before the congregation of Israel, is convenient for cattle, and thy servants have cattle. Wherefore, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession; bring us not over Jordan. Moses said to the sons of Gad, and to the sons of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and ye remain here? Wherefore discourage ye the children of Israel, from going over into the land which the Lord will give them? But they approached him, and said, We will here only build sheepfolds for our cattle, and cities for our little ones. We, ourselves, however, will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place. Our children shall, meanwhile, dwell in fortified cities, to be secure against the inhabitants of the land. We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have taken possession, every one of his inheritance. For we ask for no share on yonder side Jordan; our inheritance being fallen to us this side Jordan, eastward. To this Moses replied, If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the Lord to war, until he hath driven out his enemies before him; and if ye do not return until afterwards, and thus acquit yourselves of your obligation towards the Lord and towards Israel, this land shall be your possession before the Lord. But if ye will not do so, ye sin against the Lord, and ye will come to know the consequences of your sin. Build ye cities for your children, and folds for your sheep; and keep your promise. And they answered Moses, and said, Thy servants will do as the Lord

commandeth. So Moses gave unto the tribes of Reuben and of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites; the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan; the countries, with the cities thereof, which were situated on the frontiers round about.

IX. THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

"An angry man stirreth up strife; a furious man heapeth iniquity." Prov. xxix. 22.

THE Lord spake unto Moses, and said, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan, into the land of Canaan, then ye shall select convenient cities, to serve you as cities of refuge, to which any one, having killed a person unawares, may flee. These cities shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he shall have stood before the congregation in judgment. Six cities shall ye appoint for cities of refuge; namely, three on this side Jordan, and three in the land of Canaan. The congregation shall judge between the (innocent) slayer, and the avenger of blood (prosecutor), according to law, and thus deliver the slayer out of the hand of the avenger, to restore him again to the city of refuge, whither he had fled (before the sentence). But there he shall remain, until the death of the priest, who was anointed with holy oil. And after the death of the high priest, he may return unto the land of his possession. These shall be statutes of judgment unto you, throughout your generations, in all your dwellings.

THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES. (DEUTERONOMY.)

ספר דברים

I. MOSES' ADDRESS TO ISRAEL.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. GRATITUDE TOWARDS GOD, AND REVERENTIAL FEAR OF HIM. CHARITY TOWARDS THE POOR AND THE HELPLESS.

It came to pass in the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, that Moses spoke unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in charge unto them. On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses gave them further laws and precepts. He exhorted the whole people, and said unto them, Hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes, and unto the judgments, which I am now teaching you; comprehend them well, and retain them, to act accordingly. And this is the law which Moses put before the Israelites; these are the testimonies, the laws, and the judgments, which Moses spoke to the children of Israel, when they departed from Egypt. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Not only with our ancestors hath the Lord made this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive this day. The Lord talked with you face to face, out of the midst of the fire. Ye stood at the foot of the mountain; the mountain burnt, and the flame rose unto the midst of heaven, and below there were darkness, mist, and gloomy clouds. Out of the midst of the fire did the Lord speak to you; you heard distinct words, but besides the sound you perceived nothing. He himself declared unto you his covenant, that he commanded you to perform, namely, *the ten commandments*, which he afterwards himself wrote upon two tables of stone, and gave unto me. Thus it hath been shown unto you, that ye might know that the Lord is the true God, and that there is none else besides him. Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, to instruct you; and upon earth he hath showed his omnipotence and his greatness. Because he loved your fathers, and chose their posterity after them, he brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt. To drive out from

before you nations that are greater and mightier than ye are; and to bring you thither, and to give them their land for an inheritance, as hath already begun to be shown. Know, therefore, this day, and take it to your heart, that the Lord alone is God, in heaven above and upon the earth beneath, and none else. Keep, therefore, his statutes and his commandments, which I am now placing before thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee; and that thou mayest remain many years upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One and Eternal. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might. The words which I now command thee, shall ever remain upon thy heart. Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and speak of them at all times; when thou sittest in thy house, or when thou art on the way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up again. Bind them as a sign upon thy hand, wear them as a frontlet between thine eyes, and inscribe them on the door-posts of thy house and on thy gates.[1]

When thy son shall ask thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, the statutes and the judgments, which the Lord hath commanded you? Then thou shalt answer thy son, We were bondmen to Pharaoh in Egypt; but the Lord brought

[1] The precept of מזוזה. It is an important law in Israel, that it is incumbent upon every Israelite, twice daily, in the morning and in the evening, devoutly to recite this section of scripture,—"Hear, O Israel," &c. because it contains the first two principles of the Jewish religion, viz. 1. *The vivid faith in the only eternal God, as the first principle of all the religious laws;* and 2. The most fervent, and perfect *love of God*, as the first principle of the *moral law*. This love, in the ideal and practical sense, is here clearly expressed, it being said, "From all thy *heart*" (meaning the *will* to do good); "from all *thy soul*" (by *believing*, that in performing good actions—virtue—we are carrying out the will of God, for the happiness of man); and, "with all *thy might*" (implying the *practice of virtue* itself). Here we also find the *first duty of parents,—To educate their children in our holy religion*, and to teach them the duties it prescribes to us. Hence this section, together with two others (concerning the divine reward and punishment of man, and the law of fringes), forms an essential portion of our morning and evening prayers.

us out of Egypt, with a mighty hand. And in doing so, the Lord showed before our eyes great signs and wonders, as a punishment upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants. And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us hither, to give us the land concerning which he swore unto our fathers. And the Lord commanded us to live according to all these laws; to fear him, the Lord our God, that it might be well with us at all times. It shall also be accounted to us as righteousness, if we observe all the commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded them unto us. But beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day. It might occur, that when thou hast abundance of food, and hast built goodly houses, and dwellest therein; and when thou art rich in herds, and in flocks, in silver and in gold, and all that thou hast is multiplied; that thy heart be lifted up, and that thou forget the Lord thy God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; who guided thee in this great and terrible desert, where there are poisonous serpents and scorpions, where there is nought but sterility and no water; who caused water to flow forth for thee from the hardest rock; who fed thee in this wilderness with manna, which was unknown to thy fathers, in order to prove thee by adversity, and to do thee good in the end. Thou mightest then say in thy heart, My power and bravery hath acquired for me all this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may preserve his covenant, which he swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, to fear the Lord thy God; to walk in all his ways; to love him and to serve him, that is, to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes, which he commandeth thee for thy own good.[1] Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens; the earth,

[1] God, the most perfect being, does not stand in need of service from us, who are but imperfect mortals; but from affection and mercy towards us, the Universal Father commands the observance of his laws, in order that we shall practise virtue, and become happy, shun vice, and escape its punishment. All duties, therefore, which man discharges, according to the will of God, towards God, towards himself, and towards his fellow-man, he discharges *for his own good.* Hence a great teacher has justly observed, "In serving God thou servest thyself."

with all that therein is, is the Lord's thy God: for he is the God of all gods, and the Lord of all lords; the great, the mighty, and awful God, who judgeth not according to appearance, nor taketh a bribe; who procureth for the fatherless and the widow their right, and who loveth the stranger, giving him food and raiment. Ye shall likewise love the stranger, for ye were yourselves strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall follow in the ways of the Lord your God;[1] ye shall fear him, observe his commandments, obey his voice, serve him and cleave to him. If one of thy brothers shall be poor, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thy hand wide unto him, and lend him sufficient for his need, according to his want. Beware, lest the mean thought rise within thy heart—the seventh year, the year of release is at hand;[2] and lest thou, on that account, be so ill disposed towards thy poor brother as not to give him ought. If he cried unto the Lord against thee, it would be accounted to thee as a sin. *Thou shalt surely give him, and thy heart shall not be grieved* when thou givest unto him; because, for this the Lord shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all thy pursuits. For there never shall be a lack of poor in the land; therefore, I command thee widely to open thy hand to thy poor and needy brother.

II. PRECEPTS RELATING TO THE LOVE, ESTEEM, AND JUSTICE TO BE SHOWN TO OUR NEIGHBOUR, WITHOUT EXCLUDING NON-ISRAELITES.

VERACITY. PRACTICAL CHARITY.

Amongst the other laws and ordinances, which Moses, by the injunction of God, commanded the children of Israel to observe, were the following: If thou meet thy brother's ox or

[1] That is, to walk in the ways of God, as far as human power will permit; we are to love men, and be kind, benevolent, charitable, compassionate, and just.

[2] The divine law ordains (Lev. xxv. 1): "Six years thou mayest sow thy field and prune thy vineyard, and gather the fruits; but in the seventh year, the land shall celebrate a sabbath, in honour of the Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard; the after-growth, from the previous harvest, shall be free; the man-servant, the maid-servant, the poor, the stranger as well as the sojourner; also the cattle, and the beast of the field, shall enjoy the produce of the seventh year." It is called year of release, because in it all loans were remitted, and the engagements of servants expired.

his sheep going astray, thou shalt not withdraw thyself from them, but restore them unto thy brother; but if thy brother be far from you, or if thou do not know who is the owner, then thou shalt bring it unto thy house, and let it be with thee until thy brother inquire after it, and then thou shalt restore it to him. In like manner shalt thou do with his ass, and with his raiment; *thou shalt do likewise with any lost thing which thy brother hath lost, and which thou hast found; thou mayest not withdraw thyself.* If thou see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, hide not thyself from them, but assist him in lifting them up. When thou buildest a new house, thou shalt make a fence round thy roof, lest thou bring blood upon thy house, if any one fall from thence. Ye shall make unto yourselves *fringes* upon the four ends of your garments, and fasten a string of dark blue wool to those fringes. They shall be to you for fringes, that in beholding them, ye may remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye do not follow your heart and your eyes, which lead you astray.[1] Thou shalt not abhor the Edomite, for he is thy brother; thou shalt not abhor the Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his land. When thou vowest a vow unto the Lord thy God, be not tardy in performing it; for the Lord thy God requireth it of thee, and it (tardiness) would be accounted to thee as a sin; but if thou forbear to vow, thou avoidest sin: *that, however, which hath issued from thy lips, thou shalt carefully perform*, even as thou hast voluntarily vowed to the Lord thy God, and promised with thy mouth.

When ye come into the land, which the Lord shall give you, and ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up a heave-offering unto the Lord; of the first of your dough, ye shall offer up a piece for a heave-offering.[2] As the heave-offering of the threshing-floor, so shall this be brought. Of the first of your dough, ye shall at all times offer up a heave-offering unto the Lord.

[1] The commandment concerning the fringes (ציצית) has been transposed hither from Numb. xv. as it was deemed more coherent in this place.

[2] In this law (which is to be met with in Numb. xv. 17, and has been thus transposed for the same reason that is assigned in the preceding note) originates the custom practised by Jewish women, and all Jewish bakers, of taking חלה of the dough that is to be, or has been baked, as a thanks-offering unto the Giver of all Good. The Hebrew word, Chalah, signifies Cake, or a piece of dough of which cake can be made.

When thou dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge: thou shalt remain outside, and the man to whom thou dost lend, shall bring out the pledge unto thee. If he be a poor man, thou shalt not go to sleep, and keep his pledge with thee; but at sunset thou shalt restore the pledge to him, that he may sleep beneath his cover, and bless thee; but to thee it shall be accounted for a charity before the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not withhold the hire from the poor and needy day-labourer, whether he be of thy brethren or a stranger:[1] the same day shalt thou give him his hire, that the sun do not go down upon it; for he is poor, and waiteth anxiously for his wages, lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be accounted to thee for a sin. Thou shalt not pervert the right of the stranger and of the orphan, nor take a widow's raiment to pledge. When thou reapest in thy field, and forgettest a sheaf there, do not return to fetch it, but leave it for the stranger, for the orphan, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean a second time; leave it for the stranger, for the orphan, and for the widow. Remember that thou wast thyself a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore, I command thee to do this. Thou shalt not muzzle the ox while he treadeth out the corn.[2]

III. BLESSINGS AND CURSES.

"Many a one thinketh he is in the right path; but ultimately it leadeth to ruin."
Prov. xiv. 12.

Behold, I set before you this day, a blessing and a curse:—a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you; but a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord, and depart from the way which I prescribe to you. When the Lord thy God hath brought thee unto the land, whither thou goest to possess it, thou shalt appoint Mount Gerizim for the blessing, and Mount Ebal for the curse. The following tribes shall stand upon Mount Gerizim, to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar,

[1] That is, a non-Israelite.

[2] Lest he be grieved at not being able to eat. Here, as in several other commandments, we find how strongly the divine law enjoins mercy towards animals.

Joseph, and Benjamin; and these shall stand upon Mount Ebal, to curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulon, Dan, and Naphtali. And the Levites shall speak alternately, and with a loud voice, say to every man of Israel, Cursed be the man man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, though he put it in a secret place; and all the people shall answer and say, So be it. Cursed be he that despiseth his father or his mother; and all the people shall say, So be it. Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's land-mark;[1] and the people shall say, So be it. Cursed be he that leadeth the blind astray;[2] and the people shall say, So be it. Cursed be he that perverteth the right of the stranger, the orphan, and the widow; and the people shall say, So be it. Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbour secretly;[3] and the people shall say, So be it. Cursed be he that accepteth a bribe, to sentence an innocent person to death; and the people shall say, So be it. Cursed be he that receiveth not the words of this law, to observe them; and the people shall say, So be it.

Ye are now all standing before the Lord your God, the chiefs of your tribes and families, your elders and your officers, with all the men of Israel; your children, your wives, and the stranger, who is in the camp with you, from the hewer of wood unto the drawer of water. That thou shouldst enter into the covenant, and the oath (as a curse in case of transgression), to which the Lord bindeth thee this day. To adopt thee thereby as his people, and to be thy God, as he hath promised to thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Neither with you alone do I establish this covenant and this oath, but with him who standeth here with us before the Lord our God; and also with him that is not here with us. See, I set before thee (Israel) this day, life (virtue) and happiness, death (vice) and unhappiness. For I have commanded thee to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, his statutes, and his judgments; in doing which, thou shalt

[1] This refers to every encroachment upon the rights of our neighbour.

[2] The term "blind" must here be understood in a figurative sense also, or as applying to the mentally blind, i. e. those who are ignorant on any subject, and come to us for information.

[3] Smiting, here means to traduce, to mortify, or in any wise secretly to offend our neighbour.

preserve thy life, and multiply, and the Lord thy God shall bless thee. But if thy heart turn away, and be disobedient, I declare unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and not remain long in the country which I am about to give you for a possession. I call herewith heaven and earth to witness against you, that I have set before thee life and death, blessing and cursing; *choose life* (virtue), that both thou and thy posterity may be preserved. Love the Lord thy God, obey his voice, cleave unto him; for upon that dependeth thy preservation and thy long life. For this commandment, which I now command thee, is not concealed from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou couldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, to fetch it down, and to make it known to us, and we will do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou couldst say, Who shall go for us over the sea, to fetch it over, and to make it known to us, that we might keep it? But the word is very nigh unto thee; thou hast it in thy mouth, and knowest in thy heart, how it is to be observed.[1]

IV. MOSES IS TOLD BY THE LORD THAT HE MUST DIE. JOSHUA'S DIVINE NOMINATION TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PEOPLE. MOSES RECOMMENDS CONFIDENCE IN GOD, AND OBSERVANCE OF HIS LAWS.

THE Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Ascend this mountain, Abarim, and look from thence upon the land which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession. When thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. Because ye acted contrary to my will in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, where ye ought to have sanctified me before their eyes; that is, at the waters of Meribah (strife), in Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin. And Moses spoke unto the Lord, saying, Let the Lord, the God of all spirits and of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out and in before them, and who may lead them out, and bring them in; that the congre-

[1] Man has, at all times, and in all places, the means and the opportunity of being virtuous, and consequently happy; to this he only needs his own self (of course considered as a member of human society) having the law of God—religion —in his mouth, i. e. practising it, and in his heart, i. e. having an earnest and sincere desire for such practice.

gation of the Lord be not as sheep without a shepherd. The Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is spirit, and lay thy hand upon him. And place him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation, and give him instructions in their sight. Put some of thy majesty upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may obey him. Moses did as the Lord had commanded him; and he took Joshua, and placed him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation, put his hand upon him, and gave him instructions, as the Lord had commanded through Moses.

Moses went and addressed the following harangue unto Israel. He said to them, I am a hundred and twenty years old, and can no more go out and come in before you; also, the Lord hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan. Only be of good courage and valiant; fear ye not, and let not your courage be depressed before the nations; for the Lord your God, he himself goeth with you; he will not withdraw his hand from you, nor forsake you. And he called unto Joshua, and said to him, in the presence of all Israel, Be of good courage and valiant, for thou shalt come with this people into the land which the Lord hath sworn to their ancestors, and thou shalt establish them there. The Lord will be with thee; he will not withdraw his hand from thee, and not forsake thee. Fear not, neither be dismayed. Moses wrote down this whole law (namely, all the laws), delivered them unto the priests, the sons of Levi, who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel. And he commanded them to read this law aloud, in the presence of all Israel, before the Lord. And he said to Joshua, Gather the people together there (viz. in the place where they appear before the Lord), men, women, and children;[1] the stranger, who sojourneth within thy gates, that they may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, and strictly to observe all the words of this law. And that their children, too, who are yet ignorant, may hear and learn to reverence the Lord your God, as long as ye live on earth. After this, Moses blessed all Israel.

[1] *Women* and *children*, then, according to this declaration of the divine law, are bound to be present at the reading of the Law, to hear, and to attend to the holy doctrines of our religion. O, that the women and daughters of Israel would take this to heart!

V. DEATH OF MOSES. PUBLIC MOURNING FOR HIM. JOSHUA IS ACCEPTED BY THE PEOPLE AS THEIR LEADER.

"The memory of the just is everlasting." Psalm cxii. 6.

On the self-same day, the Lord spoke unto Moses, Go up unto the mountain Abarim, unto Mount Nebo, which is situated in the land of Moab, opposite to Jericho. And thou shalt die upon that mount, and be gathered unto thy people; even as Aaron died upon Mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people. Moses went up unto Mount Nebo, to the summit, Pisgah. And the Lord showed him the whole country, and said to him, This is the land, concerning which I swore unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, To thy posterity will I give it for a possession. I have permitted thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not come thither. Thus died Moses, the servant of the Lord, in the land of Moab, by the command of the Lord. He buried him in the valley, in the land of Moab, opposite to Beth-Peor, and no man hath discovered his sepulchre unto this day. Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eye was not dim, nor had his vigour abated. And the children of Israel wept for Moses, in the plain of Moab, thirty days; the period of mourning for Moses then terminated. Joshua, the son of Nun, was replete with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. And the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and obeyed him, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

But there arose not again in Israel a prophet like Moses, with whom the Lord communed face to face;[1] nor in regard to the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh, his servants, and all his land; and with regard to all the mighty and awful deeds which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel.

[1] That is, who had such a distinct and definite revelation, and who contributed so much to perpetuate the observance and influence of the divine precepts and laws throughout all future times and generations.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

סֵפֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ

I. JOSHUA IS APPOINTED BY THE LORD AS THE LEADER OF THE PEOPLE.

"The secret counsel of the Lord is with them that fear him; and his covenant he maketh known unto them." Psalm xxv. 14.

After the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, the Lord spoke unto Joshua, the son of Nun, and Moses' minister, saying, My servant Moses is now dead; arise, therefore, go over this Jordan, into the land which I give unto the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, I give unto you, as I said unto Moses. None shall be able to stand before thee, as long as thou livest; as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. I will not withdraw my hand from thee, nor ever forsake thee. Be therefore of good courage, and undaunted, for thou shalt establish this people in the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them as an inheritance. Only be thou firm and unwavering, in observing all the laws, which Moses my servant enjoined on thee; turn not from them, either to the right or to the left, that thou mayest prosper in thy ways. This book of the law shall never depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein, by day and by night, that thou observe to do according to all that is written therein. Then thou shalt prosper in all thy ways, and thou shalt succeed in all that thou dost. But, again I command thee, Be valiant and of good courage, be not dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest. Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people as follows: Walk about through the camp, and order the people to provide themselves with food; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to take possession of the land which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it. And to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, he said, Remember what Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you. It was this: that, according to your wish, ye might

settle on this side Jordan; but that all men amongst you capable of fighting should pass before your brethren armed, and render them assistance; your wives, your children, and your cattle remaining, meanwhile, on this side Jordan; until the Lord your God hath fully settled your brethren, as he hath settled you in the land. Then ye may return to the east of Jordan, into the land which Moses gave you. And they answered Joshua, and said, As thou commandest us, we will do; and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. As we obeyed Moses, so will we obey thee. Only may the Lord God be with thee, as he was with Moses. Whosoever shall rebel against thee, and not obey thy commandments, he shall be put to death; only be of good courage, and valiant.

II. THE SPIES.

"A wicked messenger causeth mischief; but a faithful ambassador bringeth salvation." Prov. xiii. 17.

Joshua now secretly sent out of Shittim two men, as spies, and said to them, Go, view the land, especially Jericho.[1] And they went, and staid with a hostess, whose name was Rahab. Now the king of Jericho was informed, that men had arrived from Israel to spy the land. And the king sent to Rahab, saying, Deliver up the men who have come to lodge at thy house, for they are come to spy the land. But the woman took the two men and hid them. Then she replied to those who had been sent to her by the king, Indeed there came men unto me, but I knew not whence they were. And when the gate was about to be shut, it having grown dark, the men went out, I know not whither; pursue after them quickly, and ye may yet overtake them. But she had brought the two men up to the roof of the house, and hid them between the stalks of flax which she had spread there. The messengers of the king having indeed gone out to pursue them, and the gate being shut, Rahab came up unto them upon the roof, and said to them, I know that the Lord will give you the land; the dread of you is already fallen upon us, and all the inhabitants of the land tremble before you. We have heard what the Lord hath done for your sakes unto Egypt, and that ye have utterly

[1] This being the first frontier town. It was also called, City of Palm-trees, from the numerous palm-trees growing in its vicinity.

destroyed the two kings, Sihon and Og. On hearing all this, we lost our courage. Verily, the Lord your God alone is in the heaven above, and in the earth beneath. Now that I have shown you kindness, I pray you swear unto me by the Lord, that ye will also show kindness to my family; and give me a true token, that ye will save alive my father, my mother, my brothers, and sisters, with all that is theirs. The men replied, We pledge our life for yours, if ye do not betray our purpose. And when the Lord gives us the land, we will deal kindly and truly with thee. Then she let them down by a cord through the window; for her house was on the town-wall, so that she dwelt, as it were, in the wall. And the men said unto her, Fasten a line of scarlet thread to this window, for a token; and gather all that belong to thee into the house. And it shall be that whosoever shall go out of the door of thy house, he hath caused his own death, and we will be guiltless. But whosoever shall remain with thee in the house, his blood shall be upon our head, if any hand be laid upon him. She answered, Be it so, and then fastened the scarlet thread to the window; and the men departed, came back to Joshua, and told him what had befallen them. And they said to Joshua, Truly, the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land, for already all its inhabitants tremble before us.

III. PASSAGE OVER THE JORDAN. THE DIVINE MIRACLES WHICH HAPPENED ON THE OCCASION. THE PASSOVER. DISCONTINUANCE OF THE CELESTIAL FOOD (MANNA).

Joshua removed with the people from Shittim, and they came to Jordan, where they tarried over night. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God: Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will drive out the nations from before you. Behold, it shall come to pass, that as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests, that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth shall rest in the waters (of Jordan), that the waters shall be stayed, and stand up like a wall. And when the people removed from their tents, the priests, bearing the ark of the covenant, were already before the people, and had come as far as Jordan. And when they dipped their feet in the brim of the water (Jordan, having, as usually about harvest-time, overflowed its banks), the waters

rose and stood up like a wall, and the lower branch, flowing into the sea, was quite cut off; so the people passed over on dry ground; but the priests remained behind, with the ark of covenant, until all the people were passed over. And Joshua commanded the children of Israel to take out of Jordan twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, and they did so. The people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho. There Joshua erected the twelve stones which they had taken with them out of Jordan. And he said unto the children of Israel, When your children shall, in time to come, ask their fathers, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, and tell them, how the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan for you, until ye were passed over, as he did to the Red Sea, until we were gone over on dry ground; that all the nations of the earth might acknowledge the omnipotence of the Lord, and that ye might at all times fear the Lord your God.

While the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, they celebrated the Passover on the fourteenth of the month, at even, in the plains of Jericho. And the following morning they ate of the corn of the land, unleavened cakes, and parched corn. Thenceforth the manna ceased,[1] and they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan.

IV. CAPTURE OF JERICHO.

"And he gave unto them the lands of the heathens, and made them inherit the labour of the nations; that they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Hallelujah." Psalm cv. 44, 45.

When Joshua was before Jericho, he lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold there stood a man over against him, with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua advanced towards him, and asked him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? He answered, Nay, but as a chief of the host of the Lord am I come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and said, What hath my lord to say unto his servant? And the chief of the host of the Lord said to Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

[1] Because they were no longer in the desert, and hence no longer needed this extraordinary food, which God rained down for them from heaven. The Lord performs miracles only where necessity requires it.

Now Jericho was shut up because of the children of Israel, so that there was no egress nor ingress. And the Lord said to Joshua, See, I deliver up to thee Jericho, with its king, and the bravest of his army. And, by the command of the Lord, Joshua ordered the priests to compass the city, with sounds of the trumpet, once each day, for six successive days, and seven times on the seventh day, in the same manner. And to the people he said, The city, with all that is therein, shall be devoted to the Lord: only Rahab, the hostess, may be saved alive, together with those who are with her in the house, because she carefully concealed the messengers whom we sent. But beware of the devoted goods, lest ye take aught thereof, for thereby ye would cause the camp of Israel to be devoted, and destroy it. All the silver and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are holy to the Lord, and must be brought into the treasury of the Lord. And he said to the people, Raise a shout. And the people shouted, the trumpets being sounded at the same time, and the wall fell down flat, and the people went up into the city and took it. They destroyed every thing that was in the city with the edge of the sword. But Joshua said to the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the house of the hostess, Rahab, and liberate her, with all that belong to her, as ye swore unto her. The two spies did so, and brought out Rahab, with her father, her mother, and all her family, and left her without the camp of Israel. The city was then burnt with fire; the silver, the gold, the vessels of brass and iron, however, were deposited in the house of the Lord, as Joshua had commanded. And the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread over all the country.

V. ACHAN'S TRANSGRESSION AND PUNISHMENT.

"The covetous bringeth trouble upon his own house." Prov. xv. 27.

But Israel committed a trespass in the devoted goods; for Achan, the son of Carmi, of the tribe of Judah, had taken of them. The anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel. And when Joshua sent about three thousand men against the city of Ai, to take possession of it, they were defeated, and lost thirty-six men. Wherefore the people grew faint-hearted, and lost all their courage. And Joshua rent his garments, and fell to the earth upon his face, before the ark of

the Lord, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. And the Lord said to Joshua, Arise, wherefore liest thou upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and acted against the covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken of the devoted goods; they have also stolen and denied it, and they have concealed it amongst their own stuff; therefore, the children of Israel can no longer stand before their enemies, and must turn their backs to them, because guilt is upon them. I will not be with you any more, except ye remove the devoted goods from amongst you. Up, prepare the people against to-morrow, when they shall appear according to their tribes and families before the Lord (before the ark of the covenant). And it shall be, that he who is taken by the Lord, and found with the devoted thing, shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath. Joshua rose up early in the morning, and ordered the people to assemble before the ark of the covenant. And first the tribe of Judah was taken; then, the family of Zerah; and, lastly, Achan. And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him, and tell me what thou hast done; withhold nothing from me.[1] And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel, and this it is which I have done: I saw among the spoil a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels' weight; I coveted them, and took them. They are hid in my tent, the silver below the rest. Joshua forthwith sent messengers into the tent, and they found it all, as Achan had said. And Joshua took Achan, his sons and his daughters, together with all that he had, as well as the stolen goods in his tent, and brought them into the valley of Achor. Here Joshua said, As thou hast troubled us, so shall the Lord bring this day trouble upon thee. And all Israel stoned him and all his family, and the rest was burnt with fire. They raised over him a great heap of stones, and the Lord was appeased. Therefore, the name of that place is called, unto this day, The valley of Achor (affliction).

[1] "He who covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy." Prov. xxviii. 13.

VI. JOSHUA'S EXECUTION OF THE COMMAND OF MOSES.

THEN Joshua built an altar in honour of the Lord upon Mount Ebal, as Moses, the servant of the Lord, had commanded the children of Israel, and as it is found written in the book of the law of Moses; an altar of unhewn stones, which no iron had touched. And they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace-offerings. And he wrote there, upon the stones, a copy of the law which Moses had prescribed to the children of Israel. And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and judges, placed themselves on both sides of the ark, opposite to the priests; the stranger, as well as he that was born among them. Half of them were turned towards Mount Gerizim, and the other half towards Mount Ebal, in order first to bless the people, as Moses, the servant of the Lord, had commanded. He afterwards read to them all the words of the law, the blessings and the curses, as it is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, women and children, and the strangers that were among them.

VII. THE GIBEONITES.

"Lying lips are abomination to the Lord; but he delighteth in them that deal truly." Prov. xii. 22.

THE inhabitants of Gibeon had heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and unto Ai, so they acted with slyness. Some of them went and pretended to be ambassadors, loaded their asses with old sacks, and old wine-bottles that were rent and bound up: they, themselves, wore old patched shoes, and old garments; and all the bread of their provision was stale and mouldy. In this manner they came to Joshua, and said to him, and to all Israel, We, thy servants, come from a far country, in honour of the Lord thy God, whose fame hath reached us; for we have heard what he did to Egypt, and to the two kings of Amori, beyond Jordan. Wherefore our elders, and all the inhabitants of the land, said unto us, Provide yourselves with food, and go to meet them, and say to them, We are your servants, therefore now make ye a league with us. This bread was fresh, when we took it with us from home;

but now, behold, it is stale and mouldy. And these wine-bottles were new when we filled them; behold now they are rent. These shoes, and these garments, are become old, from our long journey. And the men of Israel partook of their provision,[1] without having first asked the Lord. And Joshua agreed to peace, and made a league with them, and promised that he would let them live; and the princes of the congregation swore the same unto them. But at the end of three days, Joshua learned that they were neighbours, and dwelt in the midst of them; for the children of Israel came unto their city. Then said Joshua, and all the princes, to the congregation, *We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel, and therefore we may not do them any harm*, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath.[2] They shall, however, serve the congregation as hewers of wood and drawers of water. And Joshua agreed to what the princes had said. And he appointed them from that day, to be for ever, hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the Lord, in the place which he should choose.

VIII. JOSHUA ASSISTS THE GIBEONITES AGAINST THE NEIGHBOURING KINGS. THE FURTHER TAKING AND DIVIDING THE COUNTRY.

FIDELITY TO ENGAGEMENTS. THE LORD ASSISTS THE RIGHTEOUS.

THE kings of the country having heard that Joshua had taken Jericho and Ai, and that the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, they were greatly afraid; for Gibeon was a great city, and the men thereof were very valiant. And five kings of the Amorites rose up with their armies against Gibeon, and made war against it. But the inhabitants of Gibeon sent unto Joshua, saying, We pray you, withhold not thine aid from thy servants, but hasten up to us, to assist us against the kings of the Amorites, who have joined together against us. Joshua therefore quitted his camp in the night, with the whole army,

[1] This being the customary token of friendship and alliance.

[2] To the honest man, the word he has once given is holy and inviolable, though it should occasion him the greatest injury. How much more sacred should an oath be! Joshua and the elders had pledged themselves by oath to the Gibeonites; accordingly, they were bound to keep the engagement, even to these false people. A worthy example of the sanctity attached to an oath.

and came upon them by surprise. And the Lord discomfited them before Israel, so that they suffered a severe defeat. And in their flight before Israel, the Lord cast down upon them great hailstones; and more perished by the hailstones than by the sword. It was then on the occasion of the victory of Israel over the Amorites, that Joshua sang in honour of the Lord, and spoke before the children of Israel, *Tarry, O sun, upon Gibeon; and thou, O moon, in the valley of Ajalon.* And the sun tarried, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Thus Joshua vanquished the kings of the Amorites, conquered their towns, and smote them with the edge of the sword. He then returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal. Other kings and cities, too, that did not peaceably submit to the children of Israel, Joshua waged war against, and conquered; in all thirty-one kings. Thus Joshua took possession of the whole country, just as the Lord had spoken to Moses, and gave it to the children of Israel as an inheritance, in divisions, according to their tribes. The tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, however, received their possessions to the east of Jordan, in the land of Gilead, as Moses had granted to them. But for the tribe of Levi, Moses had appointed no inheritance; the Lord, the God of Israel, was to be their heritage, as he had promised unto them. All that the Lord had commanded Moses, the children of Israel observed, in the dividing of the land.

IX. JOSHUA DISMISSES THE TRIBES OF REUBEN AND GAD, AND HALF THE TRIBE OF MANASSEH, AND EXHORTS THEM TO FEAR THE LORD, AND TO OBEY HIS LAW. APPREHENSION OF THE REST OF THE TRIBES, ON ACCOUNT OF THE ALTAR ERECTED ON THIS SIDE OF JORDAN, BY THE AFORESAID TRIBES.

Then Joshua convened the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, and said unto them, Ye now have performed all that Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you, and have also obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. Ye have not abandoned your brethren this long time, even unto this day, but have faithfully observed the command of the Lord your God. And now the Lord your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them. Return

ye, now, and get ye unto your tents, unto the land of your possession, which Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave you on the other side of Jordan. Only take diligent heed to observe the commandment and the law, which Moses, the servant of the Lord, enjoined on you: to love the Lord your God; to walk in his ways; to keep his commandments; to cleave to him, and to serve him, with all your heart, and with all your soul. Hereupon Joshua blessed them, dismissed them, and they went unto their tents.

And when they came near to Jordan, they erected a great altar, merely for show. But when the children of Israel in the country heard this, they sent Phinehas, the son of the priest Eleazar; and ten heads of tribes, one of each tribe, to go to them. They came unto them in the land of Gilead, and said unto them, as follows: Thus saith the whole congregation of the Lord, What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, in that ye have built you an altar, that ye might revolt from the Lord? Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed unto this day, although it occasioned a plague in the congregation of the Lord, that ye must now again turn away from the Lord? And it may easily come to pass, seeing ye rebel this day against the Lord, that to-morrow he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel. If, however, the land of your possession seem to you unholy, then come over into the land of the Lord, wherein the habitation of the Lord standeth, and settle amongst us: only revolt ye not from the Lord, in building you an altar, beside the altar of the Lord our God.[1] Then the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, answered and said, The God of all gods, the Lord, he, the Omniscient, he knoweth our intentions, and Israel also shall

[1] May this anxiety about the religious bond,—this fervent interest in the holy cause of our faith, serve as an example for imitation! Our fathers kindly invite their brethren from beyond Jordan, to come back again to them, and offer them land and habitation; being only anxious that they should remain united with the congregation of the Lord, and not depart from the faith of their common fathers. In this anxiety they preferred to deny themselves, and to forego many a comfort and many an advantage, rather than to see their brethren in the faith desert the covenant of the Lord. Thus they preferred their spiritual weal to temporal advantages. How different would things be with the community of Israel, if we, also, each of us, according to his power, would actively interest ourselves in the common cause! Indeed, how much better might it be on earth, if all men mutually, and with a disinterested zeal, were active in promoting the common welfare!

know them. If revolt or treachery against thee, O Lord, have been our intention, be henceforth no more our aid; if we have not rather done it in fear, lest your children should one day say unto our children, What claims have ye on the Lord, the God of Israel? For the Lord hath made Jordan a boundary between us and you; ye have therefore no part in the Lord. Thus your children might prevent ours from paying homage to the Lord. Therefore we built an altar; but neither for burnt-offerings, nor for sacrifice; but that it may be a witness between us and you for our posterity, that we might perform the service of the Lord before him. And that your children may not say to ours, Ye have no part in the Lord. When Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation, who were with him, heard these words, they were satisfied. And they returned from the land of Gilead unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again. And the thing pleased the children of Israel, and they praised God, and abandoned their intention of going up against them in battle, and of destroying their country. And the children of Reuben and of Gad called the altar Ed (witness); for, said they, it is a witness between us, that the Lord alone is our God.

X. THE LAST EXHORTATION ADDRESSED BY JOSHUA TO ISRAEL. DEATH OF JOSHUA.

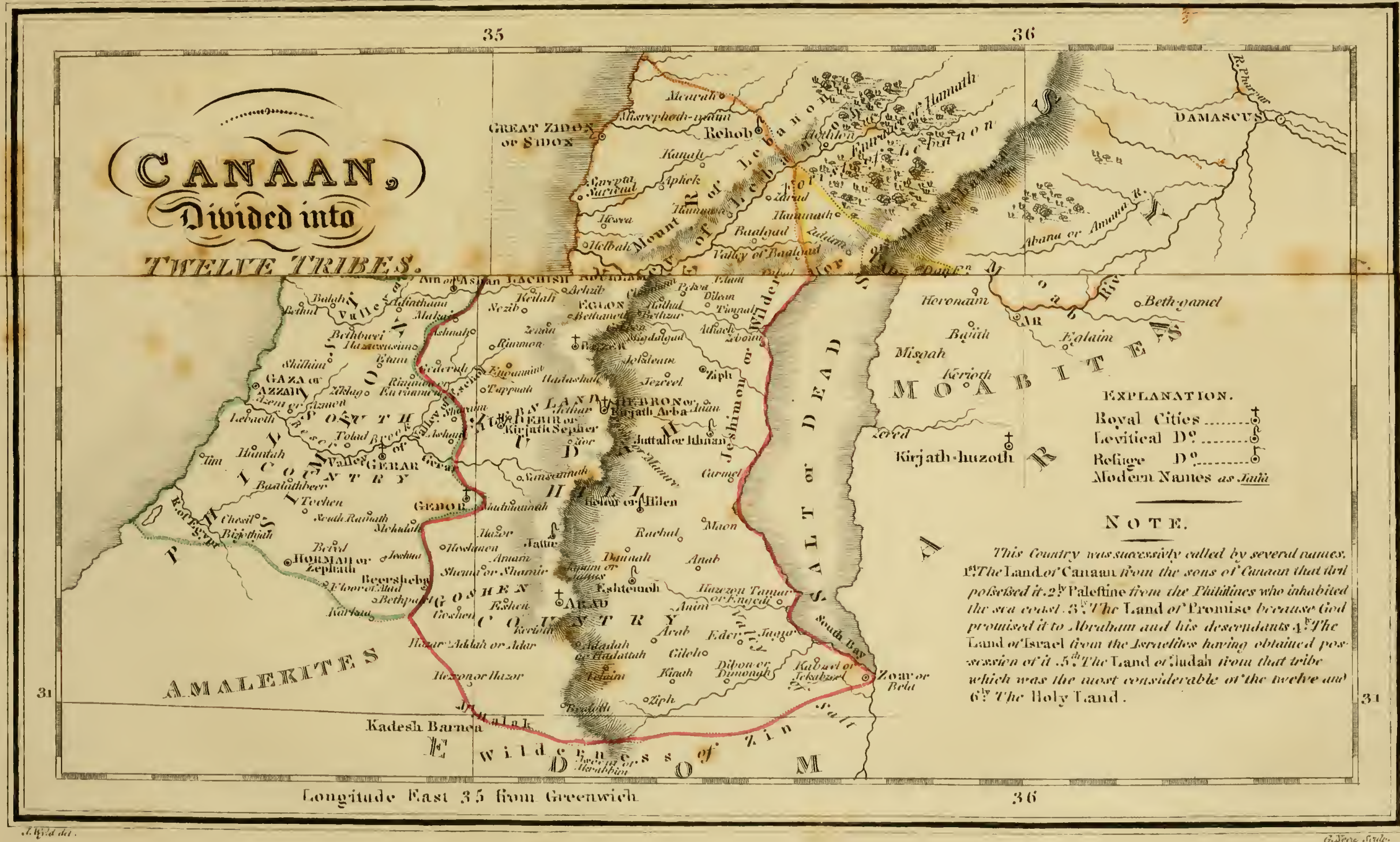
"The fear of the Lord is a strong-hold to his children; it is a place of refuge." Prov. xiv. 26.

And it came to pass, a long time after the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua convened all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders, the chiefs, the judges, and the officers of the people; and they met before the Lord. And Joshua addressed them, and said, I now am old, and advanced in days, but ye have seen what the Lord your God hath done unto all these nations for your sakes; how the Lord your God hath fought for you. The land hath been allotted to you according to your tribes; and the nations that remain, the Lord shall likewise expel from before you, as he hath promised unto you. But be ye very firm, strictly to observe and to perform all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye deviate not therefrom, either to the right hand or to the left. And that ye by no means come among the remaining nations around

you. Ye shall not mention the name of their gods, nor swear by them, neither serve them, nor pay them homage; but only to the Lord your God ye shall cleave, as ye have hitherto done. Behold, I am now going the way of all the earth. Acknowledge ye now, with all your hearts, and with all your souls, that not the least thing remaineth unaccomplished of all the good things which the Lord your God promised you. But as all good things which the Lord your God promised are come upon you, so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land. If ye transgress the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods, the anger of the Lord shall be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

And he continued, and spoke to the whole people as follows: Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Of old your fathers dwelt beyond the river,[1] even Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nachor; and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from beyond the river, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and gave him Isaac; and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau; to Esau I gave Mount Seir for a possession; and Jacob and his sons went down into Egypt. Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and plagued Egypt by the miracles which I there performed; and afterwards I brought you out thence. And when I brought your fathers out of Egypt, the Egyptians pursued them unto the Red Sea. There they cried to the Lord; and he caused a darkness to arise between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them. Your eyes have seen what I have done to Egypt. Then ye dwelt in the wilderness a long time. And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, beyond Jordan. They fought with you; I delivered them into your hand, and ye took possession of their land. Then Balak, the king of Moab, rose up against you, and sent for Balaam to curse you: but I would not hearken unto Balaam, and he was compelled to bless you; so I delivered you out of his hand. And ye passed over Jordan, and I gave the nations of the country into your hands, and ye took possession of their cities. Thus I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not. Ye possess them; ye enjoy vineyards and

[1] Euphrates.



CANAAN, Divided into TWELVE TRIBES.
35
36
31
GREAT ZIDON or SIDON
DAMASCUS
R. Pharpar
Rehob
Kanah
Aphek
Sarepta Sarfand
Hosea
Helbah
Mearah
Misrephoth-maim
Mount of Lebanon
Baalgad
Valley of Baalgad
Hamath
Heronaim
Beth-gamel
AR
Eglaim
Misgah
Kerioth
MOABITES
Kirjath-huzoth
Zered
GAZA or AZZAH
Lebaoth
Shilhim
Ziklag
GERAR
GEDOR
HORMAH or Zephath
Beersheba
Kadesh Barnea
AMALEKITES
HEBRON or Kirjath Arba
DEBIR or Kirjath Sepher
Juttah or Idnan
Ziph
Maon
Carmel
Eshtemoh
ARAD
Hazezon Tamar or Engedi
Jeshimon or Wilderness
SALT or DEAD SEA
South Bay
Zoar or Bela
Wilderness of Zin
EDOM
EXPLANATION.
Royal Cities
Levitical Do.
Refuge Do.
Modern Names as Jafa
NOTE.
This Country was successively called by several names. 1st The Land of Canaan from the sons of Canaan that first possessed it. 2ly Palestine from the Philistines who inhabited the sea coast. 3ly The Land of Promise because God promised it to Abraham and his descendants. 4ly The Land of Israel from the Israelites having obtained possession of it. 5th The Land of Judah from that tribe which was the most considerable of the twelve and 6ly The Holy Land.
Longitude East 35 from Greenwich
J. Wyld del.
G. Terre Sculp.

CANAAN.
Divided into
TWELVE TRIBES.
Joshua. Chap. 13 to 19.
British Statute Miles
35
36
33
32
31
Great Sea or Mediterranean
Dead Sea
Jordan River
Valley of Jordan
Valley of Hinnom
Valley of Rephaim
Valley of Elah
Valley of Ajalon
Valley of Sorek
Valley of Eshcol
Valley of Jericho
Valley of Achor
Valley of Salt
Valley of Zeboim
Valley of Ono
Valley of Gibeon
Valley of Ajalon
Valley of Sorek
Valley of Eshcol
Valley of Jericho
Valley of Achor
Valley of Salt
Valley of Zeboim
Valley of Ono
Valley of Gibeon
Great Zidon or Sidon
Damascus
Tyre
Hebron or Abdon
Rehob
Hazor
Dabeerah
Kartah
Ashtaroth Carnaim
Mahanaim
Jazer
Heshbon
Medeba
Aroer
Rabbath Ammon
Mephaath
Shittim
Jericho
Bezer
Kedemoth
Beth ramel
Mizpah
Kerioth
Kirjath huzoth
Jabesh Gilead
Ramoth Gilead
Gilgal
Shechem
Tappuah
Tirzah
Lasharon
Joppa
Gezer
Ekron
Gath
Ashdod
Ashkelon
Gaza
Eglon
Libnah
Lachish
Debir
Hebron
Jattir
Ether
Ashan
Juttah
Eshtemoh
Holon
Debir
Goshen
Kadesh Barnea
Zoar or Bela
Bashan
Land of Gilead
Land of Mizpeh
Land of Shual
Land of Manasseh
Land of Ephraim
Land of Dan
Land of Benjamin
Land of Judah
Land of Simeon
Land of Issachar
Land of Zebulun
Land of Asher
Land of Naphtali
Land of Gad
Land of Reuben
Land of Moab
Land of Ammon
Land of Amalekites
Land of Canaanites
Land of Hittites
Land of Perizzites
Land of Hivites
Land of Jebusites
Land of Girgashites
Land of Amorites
Mount Hermon or Senir
Mount Gilead
Mount Ephraim
Mountains of Judah
Plain of Sharon
Plain of Jericho
Wilderness of Judah
Wilderness of Zin
Wilderness of Paran
Wilderness of Kedemoth
Wilderness of Bezer
Wilderness of Jattir
Wilderness of Ether
Wilderness of Ashan
Wilderness of Juttah
Wilderness of Eshtemoh
Wilderness of Holon
Wilderness of Debir
Wilderness of Goshen
Wilderness of Kadesh Barnea
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Royal Cities
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Longitude East 35 from Greenwich
36

olive-yards, which ye planted not. Now, therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth. Remove the gods which your fathers served beyond the river, and serve ye the Lord alone. But if the service of the Lord displease you, well, then, choose whom you will serve; whether the gods beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. The people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, and serve other gods; for the Lord our God, he it is that brought us and our fathers up out of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we have hitherto gone; therefore, we will also serve the Lord, for he is our God. And Joshua said unto the people, But it will not be so easy for you to serve the Lord; for he is a holy and jealous God, who will not show indulgence to your transgressions and sins. If ye forsake him, he will deal harshly with you, and consume you, though he before have done you good. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay, but we will serve the Lord. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves, that ye have chosen the Lord, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and gave them a law and ordinance. And he inscribed these words in the book of the law of God; he then took a great stone, and raised it under the terebinth that stood by the sanctuary of the Lord. And he said to the whole people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spoke unto us. It shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God. Joshua then dismissed the people, every one unto his tent. After these things, Joshua, the son of Nun, died, being a hundred and ten years old. And they buried him within the boundaries of his possession, at Timnath-Sera, in Mount Ephraim. The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up out of Egypt, they interred in Shechem, in the tract of land which Jacob had purchased, and which had fallen to the share of Joseph's sons. And Eleazar, the son of Aaron, also died, and they buried him in Mount Ephraim, in the hill that had been given to his son Phineas.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

סֵפֶר שׁוֹפְטִים

I. THE JUDGES OTHNIEL AND EHUD.

"O Israel, confide in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and plenteous redemption. He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." Psalm cxxx. 7, 8.

AFTER the death of Joshua, the servant of the Lord, the people continued to serve the Lord, during the lifetime of the elders who survived Joshua, and who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel. But when these elders, as well as all the men of that age, had been gathered to their fathers, there arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord, nor yet the great deeds which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served idols. And they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the nations that were round about them (viz. whom they had not vanquished), and worshipped them in their groves. And they took the daughters of the nations to be their wives, gave their daughters to their sons, and thus did much evil in the sight of the Lord. Therefore the Lord delivered them into the hands of their enemies, so that they could not resist them. And Israel was greatly distressed. And when they cried unto the Lord, repented of their bad conduct, and amended, then the Lord heard them, and had mercy upon them, because of their troubles. For the Lord raised them up judges, and he was with the judge, so that he delivered them out of the hand of their enemies. When the judge was dead, however, they relapsed into their bad conduct, did not desist from their transgressions, and even practised more evil than their fathers. And when they did such evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, his anger was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of Cushan-Rishathaim, king of Aram Naharaim (Mesopotamia.) And they had to serve him eight years.

But when they cried unto the Lord, he raised up for them a deliverer, even *Othniel*, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's[1] younger brother. And the sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and took it. Also the environs of Hebron, where there were the giants, Sheshai, Achimar and Talmai they conquered. Thence they removed towards Debir, which town was formerly called Kirjath-sepher. And Caleb said, He that subdueth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah, my daughter, to wife. And Othniel, the son of Kenaz, took the city; and Caleb gave him his daughter Achsah to wife. Now this Othniel judged Israel, and delivered them from their enemies. He was animated by a divine courage, went to war against Cushan, and the Lord caused him to obtain a complete victory over him. Hereupon the land rested forty years. But when the judge Othniel was dead, the children of Israel resumed doing evil in the eyes of the Lord. And the Lord strengthened Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel. And he was joined by Ammon and Amalek, defeated Israel, and took possession of the city of palms (Jericho). And the children of Israel were subject to Moab eighteen years. But when they cried unto the Lord, he raised them up a judge and a deliverer, in the person of *Ehud*, the son of Gerah, of the tribe of Benjamin. One day, the children of Israel sent him with a present to Eglon, the king of Moab. But Ehud had caused a short two-edged sword to be made for himself, which he girt under his raiment, round his loins. When he had presented the gift, he dismissed the men who had borne it; but he himself returned to the king Eglon, and said to him, I have a private errand unto thee, my king. And he said, Let me be left alone; and forthwith all that stood by him withdrew. Ehud approached him; he was sitting in his summer parlour; and said, I have a message from God unto thee; whereupon the king arose from his seat. Ehud now seized his sword, and thrust it into his body, went forth, and shut the door upon him, and locked it. When the servants found the door locked, they thought their lord the king had locked himself in. And after having waited a long while, they opened the door, and found their lord lying dead upon the floor. But Ehud had escaped while they tarried, and reached the mountains of Ephraim. Here he caused the trum-

[1] The son of Jephuneh, and one of the spies. (Vide above, Numbers, page 83.)

pet to be sounded, whereupon the children of Israel gathered around him. He took the lead, and said, Follow after me; for the Lord hath delivered your enemy into your hands. They did so, and slew of Moab, at that time, ten thousand men, the flower of the army, and not one escaped; so Moab was subdued, under the power of Israel, and the land had rest eighty years.

II. THE PROPHETESS AND JUDGE DEBORAH, AND THE GENERAL BARAK.

"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of our God. They are brought down, and fall; but we stand upright, and endure." Psalm xx. 7, 8.

After the death of Ehud, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord. And the Lord abandoned them into the hand of Jabin, a king of Canaan. And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord; for Jabin had nine hundred iron chariots, and oppressed Israel for twenty years. Now Deborah, the prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, judged Israel at that time. She had her seat under the palm-tree of Deborah, in Mount Ephraim; there the children of Israel came unto her for judgment. And she sent for Barak, the son of Abinoam, out of Kadesh-Naphtali, and said to him, Behold, the Lord, the God of Israel, commandeth thee, saying, Go, and draw to thee ten thousand men of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, towards Mount Tabor. And I will induce Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to march against thee with his army, and with his chariots, to the river Kishon, where I will deliver him into thy hand. And Barak answered and said, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go. She said, Well, I will go with thee; but thy glory shall not be on this journey; for now it will be said, the Lord defeateth Sisera by the hand of a woman. Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kadesh. And Barak levied ten thousand men, led them up to Mount Tabor, whither Deborah also went with him. When Sisera was informed that Barak had concentrated his forces upon Mount Tabor, he gathered together all his chariots, and his whole army, and marched to the river Kishon. And Deborah said unto Barak, Up, for this very day the Lord delivereth Sisera into thy hand. Behold, the Lord himself goeth before thee. Barak now descended from Mount Tabor,

and the ten thousand men with him. And the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, so that they fell by the edge of the sword before Barak. Sisera, however, alighted from his chariot, and fled on foot. And Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the army; and the whole army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword, not one escaped. But Sisera was fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite (being one of the sons of Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses); for there was an alliance between the king Jabin and the house of Heber, the Kenite. Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord; turn in unto me; fear not. He turned in unto her, into the tent, and she covered him with a mattress. And he said, Give me, I pray, a little water, for I am very thirsty. And she handed him a bottle of milk, gave him drink, and covered him again. Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent, and if any one come and ask thee, Is there any man here? Say, No. And when he was fast asleep, Jael took one of the nails of the tent, and a hammer, went softly unto him, and drove the nail through his temple into the ground, and he died.[1] Barak, being meanwhile in pursuit of Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said to him, Come, I will show thee the man whom thou seekest. He went into her tent, and, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temple. So God humbled in that day Jabin, the king of Canaan, before the children of Israel. Then did Deborah and Barak sing to the Lord a song of praise and thanksgiving. And the hand of the children of Israel lay more and more heavy upon Jabin, until they had destroyed him completely. And the land had rest forty years.

III. THE JUDGE GIDEON.

"I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears."
Psalm xxxiv. 5.

When Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, he delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years. And the hand of Midian was heavy upon Israel, so that they were

[1] A barbarous, revolting deed, if judged according to our own times and manners; but, considering the then barbarous age, and the mode of carrying on war, the deed loses much of its horror. Probably, the woman wished, by this assassination, to ingratiate herself with the Israelites; or, perhaps, she was induced to it by a personal enmity towards either the king Jabin or his general.

obliged to conceal themselves in subterraneous caves, and in the crevices of the mountains. And when Israel had sown, Midian, Amalek, and several eastern nations, joined, and traversed the land, destroyed the fruit, and left no other sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. For they came up with their cattle, with their tents and camels, and came as grasshoppers for multitude, to desolate the land. So Israel was impoverished through Midian, and cried unto the Lord, because of them.

One day, as Gideon, the son of Joash, of the family of Abiezer, was threshing wheat by the wine-press, to hide it from the Midianites, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said, The Lord is with thee, thou valiant man. Go, and by thy valour, save the children of Israel out of the hands of the Midianites; behold, I send thee. But Gideon replied, Pardon, my Lord, wherewith could I save Israel? Behold, my band is the smallest in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house. And the Lord said unto him, I will be with thee, and so thou shalt defeat the Midianites, as one man. And he said, If I have found grace in thy sight, show me a sign, that thou speakest to me in the name of the Lord. And when he had presented to him a prepared kid, and unleavened cakes, and laid them before him upon a rock, the angel of the Lord touched, with the end of the staff that was in his hand, the flesh and the cakes. A fire instantly proceeded from the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and the angel of the Lord disappeared. Then Gideon perceived that it was an angel of the Lord, and exclaimed, Alas, O Lord God! I have seen an angel of the Lord, from face to face. But the Lord said to him, Peace be with thee, fear not, thou shalt not die. Then Gideon built an altar there in honour of the Lord, and called it, Peace of the Lord. And it came to pass, the same night, that the Lord said to him, Go, and throw down the altar of Baal of thy father's, together with the grove that is by it. And build an altar unto the Lord, upon the top of this rock, and take thy father's bullock that is seven years old, and offer it up as a burnt-offering, with the wood of the grove, which thou shalt cut down. Gideon took ten of his servants, and did as the Lord had commanded him. But as he was afraid, on account of his family and of his fellow-citizens, to execute it by day, he did it by night. And when the citizens the following morning saw that the altar of Baal was

cast down, and the grove cut down, they made diligent inquiry, and discovered that it was Gideon, the son of Joash, who had done it. And they said to Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die for his deed. But Joash replied, to all those who surrounded him, Will ye plead for Baal? Will ye save him? He that will plead for him shall be put to death. If he be a god, he will himself take his revenge, because his altar hath been destroyed.

IV. GIDEON'S COURAGE AND BRAVERY.

"The pious is happy in his faith." Hab. ii. 4.

THE Midianites, joined by Amalek and the people of the east, had rallied their forces, and encamped in the valley of Jezreel. But Gideon, inspired by a divine courage, caused the trumpet to be sounded, and the house of Abiezer joined him. He also sent messengers to the remaining families of Manasseh, and they also came to follow his standard. He likewise sent messengers to Asher, to Zebulun, and to Naphtali, and they came to meet him. And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast spoken, behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if there be dew on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I be assured that thou wilt save Israel by my hand. And it was so: when he rose up in the morning, the wool was saturated with dew. And Gideon again said unto God, Be not angry, if I pray once more, Let me, I pray thee, make another trial with the wool: Let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night: there was dew on all the ground, and the fleece only was dry. But the Lord said to Gideon, The people that are with thee are too numerous for me to deliver Midian into their hands. Israel might vaunt themselves, and say, *My own* might hath saved me. Select, therefore, from the whole people, three hundred of the best and bravest, namely, such as never have worshipped Baal; all the rest may return home. Gideon did accordingly. The same night, the Lord said to him, Arise, get thee down with thy shield-bearer, into the camp of the Midianites (it was before him, in the valley below), and hear what they speak, that will strengthen thy arms, and thou shalt confidently march down against them. And he went down with Parah, his shield-

bearer, unto the furthermost end of the camp. And when he arrived, he heard a man telling a dream unto another, saying, Behold, I dreamt, I heard the crackling of barley bread, rolling about in the camp; then it was as if it came unto a tent, and upset it, so that the tent lay overturned. The other replied, and said, This meaneth nothing else but the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel, into whose hand God shall deliver Midian, and all the host. When Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, he fell down to worship, returned to his men, and said, Arise, for the Lord delivereth the camp of Midian into your hands. He then divided the three hundred men into three companies, put a trumpet and an empty pitcher in every one's hand; and in the pitchers he put torches. And he said unto them, Whatever ye see me do, do ye likewise. When I, and those who are with me, sound the trumpet, sound ye also your trumpets, on every side of the camp, and exclaim, *The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.* So when Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp (it was the beginning of the second vigil),[1] they sounded the trumpets, and broke the pitchers, which were in their hands. At the same time, the other divisions sounded their trumpets also, breaking the pitchers, and holding the torches in their left hand; and all of them exclaimed, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Thus they surrounded the camp, and the trumpets continued to sound. And the camp of the Midianites was thrown into confusion, so that they drew their own swords against each other, and the army fled. The men of Israel now gathered themselves together, and pursued after Midian; and there fell of Midian, and their allies, a hundred and twenty thousand men. And they took prisoners the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmuna (whom Gideon ordered to be decapitated, because they had slain his brother). The remainder of the hostile army was dispersed. Midian now was humbled before Israel, and could no more lift up their heads; and the country again had peace forty years, as long as Gideon lived.—Israel said to Gideon, Rule thou over us, thou as well as thy son, and thy grandson; for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. But Gideon replied, I will not rule over you, neither shall my

[1] That is, after the sentinel of the camp had been relieved, which was done every third part of the night.

son rule over you; let the Lord be your ruler.[1] Gideon now again lived quietly in his own house. And he died in a happy old age, and was interred in the sepulchre of his father Joash, in Ophrah, which belonged to the family of Abiezer.

V. ABIMELECH MADE KING. THE PARABLE OF JOTHAM. GAAL.

Love of dominion is coupled with wickedness and cruelty. The wicked do not escape Divine judgment.

GIDEON had seventy sons, and of a concubine in Shechem he had one son, whose name was Abimelech. And Abimelech went to Shechem, unto the brothers of his mother, and spoke to them and to their family as follows: Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, and ask them, What would be better for you? Either that seventy men, all the sons of Gideon, rule over you, or that you have but one chief? Remember, also, that I am your relative. And his mother's brethren spoke on his behalf to the men of Shechem, so that their hearts inclined in favour of Abimelech, for they said, He is our relative. And they gave him pieces of silver, wherewith he hired low and dissolute persons, who followed him. And he went unto his father's house at Ophrah, and slew all his brethren, seventy persons; only Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon, was left alive, having hid himself. The principal men of Shechem, and of Beth-Milo, now met, and declared Abimelech king. When Jotham was informed of it, he went and placed himself on the top of Mount Gerizim, lifted up his voice, and addressed the people, saying, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. The trees once went forth to anoint a king over themselves; and they said unto the olive-tree, Be king over us. And the olive-tree replied, Have I lost my fatness, by which I earn honour of God and man, that I should go to be promoted over the trees? And the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou and be

[1] Noble-minded and modest, as it behoves the pious hero, he does not aspire to rank and dominion; the consciousness of having been of service to his people, satisfies and exhilarates him. He retires into private life. To be useful to his fellow-men, is the most ardent wish of the truly pious, and the chief object of his solicitude; and *to have been* useful to them is his happiest thought, the recollection of which cheers his life, and enables him to bear up against adversity.

our king. But the fig-tree replied, Have I lost my sweetness, and my delicious fruit, that I should go to be promoted over the trees? Then the trees said to the vine, Come and be king over us. And the vine replied, Hath my wine ceased, which cheereth God and man, that I should go to be promoted over the trees? At length, all the trees said to the bramble, Come thou and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye wish to make me king over you, come and screen yourselves in my shade; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.[1] And Jotham continued and said, If, therefore, ye have acted truly and honestly in having made Abimelech king,—if ye have thereby dealt well with Gideon and his house, and have requited him according to his merit,—for my father fought for you, hazarded his life, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian,—and ye rise up against my father's house, and slay his sons, seventy persons, upon one stone, then make ye Abimelech, the son of his slave, king over you, men of Shechem, because he is your relative. If then ye have this day dealt truly and honestly with Gideon, and with his house, rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you; but if not, let fire proceed from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem; and let fire proceed from the men of Shechem, and of Beth-Milo, and devour Abimelech. And Jotham ran away, and fled to Beer, where he concealed himself from his brother Abimelech.

When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel, the Lord sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem, and they forsook his allegiance. That the cruelty perpetrated upon the seventy sons of Gideon, and their blood, might come upon Abimelech, their brother, who had slain them, and upon the men of Shechem, who had aided him in this wicked deed. About that time a man called Gaal came to Shechem, Abimelech being absent. And Gaal said to the men of Shechem, Who is Abimelech, that Shechem should be subject to him? It were better you served me, who am a descendant of Hamor, the father of Shechem.[2] And the men of Shechem placed their confidence in him. Zebul, however, the governor

[1] By this parable, Jotham wished to depict the great injustice of the Shechemites, as well as the wickedness and baseness of Abimelech, and to foretell the punishment of both parties.

[2] That is, of the first founder of Shechem. (Compare Gen. xxxiii.)

of the city, had dispatched messengers to Abimelech, who came up with an army against Shechem. And Gaal, who led the army of Shechem against Abimelech, was driven from the field, and many of them fell in the battle. And Abimelech took and destroyed the city (Shechem), and slew all the people that were therein. He also set fire to the strong-hold, where the inhabitants of the tower of Shechem had taken refuge, so that nearly a thousand men and women that were therein perished. He now laid siege to the city of Tebez, and took it. But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the inhabitants of the city. And when Abimelech came unto the tower to set fire to it, a woman cast a piece of a mill-stone upon his head, and broke his skull. Then he quickly called his young man, his armour-bearer, and said, Draw thy sword, and slay me, lest it be said of me, A woman slew him. And his young man stabbed him, and he died. When Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every one to his place. Thus God recompensed the wickedness of Abimelech, which he had perpetrated upon his father, in slaying his seventy brethren. In like manner God retorted the wickedness of the inhabitants of Shechem upon their own heads, and upon them came the curse of Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon.[1]

VI. THE JUDGE JEPHTHA, AND HIS DAUGHTER.

"It is a snare to man to perform a holy vow precipitately, and only to examine after having vowed." Prov. xx. 25.

THE children of Israel again forsook the Lord, and did not serve him. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he abandoned them to the power of the Philistines and of the Ammonites. They oppressed them grievously for eighteen years, and Israel was in great distress. And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, and said, We have sinned against thee, for we have forsaken our God, and served idols. And they removed the strange gods from among them, and

[1] Another incontrovertible proof, how, by the all-wise disposition of the Eternal Ruler of the world, the wicked and profligate inflict already here below punishment and destruction upon each other; how they lay bare to posterity the confession of their guilt, and, expiring, as it were, are obliged to pay homage to virtue and justice, exclaiming, Verily, he is a just God, rewarding the good according to their virtue, and requiting the bad according to their wickedness.

served the Lord. And the Lord had mercy on them, because of their misery, and determined to relieve them.

The children of Ammon were gathered together, and encamped in Gilead, and the Israelites also assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpah. And the people made an agreement among themselves, and said, The man who shall venture to make the first attack upon Gilead, he shall be the head over all Gilead.

At that time lived a man of Gilead whose name was Jephtha, a brave and valiant man. He had several brothers, who, when they were grown up, thrust him out of his paternal house, saying to him, Thou hast no share in our father's house, for thou art the son of a strange woman. Then Jephtha fled from his brethren, and settled in the land of Tob. There he was joined by dissolute men, who followed him on his excursions. And when war broke out between Ammon and Israel, the elders of Gilead went to Jephtha, into the land of Tob, and said to him, Come, and be our leader in our war against Ammon. But Jephtha replied, Do ye not hate me, and have ye not expelled me from my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now that ye are in distress? And they rejoined, Now, since we are come to thee, if thou wilt go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, thou shalt be the chief of the inhabitants of Gilead. And Jephtha said to the elders of Gilead, When ye shall have brought me back, to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them into my hand, shall I then still remain your chief? And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephtha, The Lord be witness between us, if we do not so as thou hast spoken. Then Jephtha went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him chief and leader. But he repeated his stipulation once more before the Lord, in Mizpah. He now sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, and ordered them to propose to him, That he should depart in peace, and not make war upon him, who had never committed any offence against him. But the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not unto the message of Jephtha. Then Jephtha was inspired with a divine courage, and he went out against the children of Ammon. And he vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou deliver the children of Ammon into my hand, then, whatsoever cometh forth out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace, shall surely be consecrated to the Lord, and I will offer it up

for an offering: so he went to fight against the children of Ammon. And the Lord delivered them into his hands. He defeated them with a great slaughter, took twenty of their cities, and thus they were totally subdued before the children of Israel. When Jephtha came to Mizpah, unto his house, his daughter came out to meet him, with timbrels and with dances. Now she was his only child, besides her he had neither son nor daughter. And when he saw her, he rent his garments, and said, Alas, my daughter, how dost thou afflict me! how dost thou afflict me! thou art to me an object of grief! But I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot retract my word. And she answered him, My father, thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord; well, do unto me as thy mouth hath spoken; forasmuch as the Lord hath permitted thee to take vengeance upon thine enemies, the children of Ammon.[1] And she continued and said, Grant me only this: Allow me a respite of two months, that I may go with my companions into the solitary valleys, to bewail my virginity. He said, Go, then. Thus he sent her away for two months. And she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. When she returned, after the lapse of two months, her father did with her according to his vow,[2] which he had vowed, and she knew no man. And it became a custom in Israel, that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephtha, four days in the year.

VII. THE JUDGE SAMSON. HIS BIRTH AND CONSECRATION TO GOD.

Abstinence leads to sanctity.

THE children of Israel continued to do evil in the sight of the Lord, and he delivered them into the hands of the Philistines, for forty years. And there was a certain man of the tribe of Dan, whose name was Manoah, and who had no children. And an angel of the Lord one day appeared unto his wife, and

[1] This answer equally shows the piety and filial obedience of the good, unfortunate virgin, and her high sense of patriotism. The defeat of the enemies is her consolation, on her being informed of her melancholy destiny.

[2] Holy Writ is not explicit on the manner in which the awful vow was executed upon the unfortunate maiden. According to the opinion of several commentators, she had to spend her life in solitary retirement.

said to her, Thou shalt bear a son. But thou must henceforth beware, and drink not wine nor strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. And no razor shall come on the head of the son whom thou shalt bear, for he shall be consecrated to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. When the woman came home, and told this to her husband, Manoah prayed unto the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God whom thou didst send, come again unto us, that he may teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. God hearkened to the prayer of Manoah, and the angel of the Lord came again unto the woman, as she sat in the field, her husband, however, being absent. Then the woman hastened and reported it to her husband. And Manoah arose, and went with his wife, and came to the man, and said, Art thou the man that spoke unto this woman? And he said, I am. Manoah said, Suppose thy words come to pass, how shall we do unto the child? He replied, Only let the woman abstain from all I said unto her. And Manoah said, Let us, I pray thee, detain thee, and prepare a kid for thee. And the angel of the Lord replied, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy food; but if thou wilt offer it up for a burnt-offering, offer it unto the Lord. (Manoah knew not that it was an angel of the Lord.) Manoah said unto him, What is thy name, that when thy words come to pass we may show thee honour? And the angel of the Lord replied, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing thou canst not comprehend it? Manoah now took a kid, with a meat-offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord. And the angel performed a miracle in the sight of Manoah and his wife; for when the flame rose from the altar towards heaven, the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. And Manoah said, We shall surely die, because we have seen a divine being.[1] But his wife replied, If the Lord intended us to die, he would not have accepted our offering, neither would he have vouchsafed to us this vision. And the woman bore a son, and called his name *Samson*. The child grew up, and the Lord blessed him, so that at times a divine spirit was discovered in him.

[1] It was generally believed, that whoever beheld a divine being must die, according to the words of God: "For no man shall see me and live." (See Exodus, page 67.)

VIII. SAMSON'S STRENGTH AND HEROIC DEEDS.

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; nor the mighty man in his might; nor the rich man in his riches; but let him who will glory, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me; how I, the Lord, practise mercy, and justice, and benevolence on earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jer. ix. 22, 23.

Samson, one day, said to his parents, I have selected for myself a woman in Timnath, of the daughters of the Philistines; now, I pray you, take her for me to wife. And his parents replied to him, Is there no woman for thee among the daughters of thy relatives, and among our people, that thou goest to take a wife of the idolatrous Philistines? But Samson said to his father, Do get her for me, for she pleaseth me well. His father and his mother knew not that the Lord had ordained it so, that he (Samson) might have an occasion against the Philistines; for, at that time, the Philistines had dominion over Israel. Then went Samson, and his father and his mother, down to Timnath. And when they arrived at the vineyards, near Timnath, a young lion, roaring, met them. Suddenly, Samson was inspired with a divine courage, and he rent the lion as one would rend a kid. But he told not his father and his mother (who were absent) what he had done. When, after some time, he again travelled the same road, behold, there was a swarm of bees, and honey in the carcase of the lion. And he took out the honey with his hands, and went and ate, and came to his parents, gave them also, and they did eat. But he told them not that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion. Samson, agreeably to custom, made a feast on the occasion of his wedding; and the Philistines brought him thirty companions, to be with him. And Samson said unto them, I will now give you a riddle to solve; if ye can truly declare it to me within the seven days of festivity, and solve it, I will give you thirty sheets, and thirty robes of honour; if, however, ye cannot tell it me, ye shall give me thirty sheets, and thirty robes of honour. They said, Tell thy riddle, that we may hear it. And he said, Out of the eater came forth food; out of the strong sweetness. But they could not solve the riddle. On the seventh day, they said to Samson's wife, Persuade thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire. Have ye

only invited us to make us poor? Then she urged Samson so strongly with tears and entreaties, that he disclosed the answer to her; and she communicated it to her compatriots. And they said to Samson, on the seventh day, before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion? He answered, If ye had not ploughed with my heifer (i. e. if you had not enticed my wife to tell you the riddle), you would not have discovered it. He now went down to Ascalon, slew there thirty men, gave to them who had solved the riddle, the promised thirty robes of honour, and returned, inflamed with rage, unto his father's house. But his wife was meanwhile given to one of his companions.

After some time, it being wheat-harvest, Samson came to visit his wife. But when he learned that she had been given to another, he thought, Now I am free from reproach, with regard to the Philistines, if I injure them. He went and caught three hundred jackals, tied their tails together, and put a firebrand between each pair; he then set the brands on fire; and thus he let them run into the standing corn of the Philistines, whereby he burnt up their corn, together with the vineyards and olives. But the Philistines, who soon heard that Samson had done them this, went and burned his wife and her father with fire. And Samson smote them, and made a great slaughter amongst them.

The Philistines then encamped in Judah. And when the people of Judah asked, why they were come in their territory, they replied, To bind Samson are we come up, to do unto him as he hath done unto us. Then three thousand men of Judah went down unto the rock Etam, where Samson dwelt, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the Philistines rule over us? What is this that thou hast done unto us? He answered, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them. And they said, We are come to bind thee, and to deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines. And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me that ye will not lay hand on me yourselves. And they said, No, we will only bind thee, and deliver thee into their hand; but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock. And when he was arrived at Lehi, and the Philistines were already triumphantly shouting on seeing him, the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms now became as flax burnt with fire, and his bands loosed

from off his hands. He perceived a fresh jaw-bone of an ass, took it up, and slew a thousand men therewith. And when he afterwards was very thirsty, he prayed unto the Lord, and said, Thou hast given thy servant this great victory, and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hands of the idolaters? But God cleft a rock, water issued thereout, he drank, was refreshed, and revived.

Samson was one day at Gaza. When the citizens discovered it, they traversed the city, and laid wait for him in quiet all the night. And they said, In the morning we shall kill him. Samson slept till midnight, then he arose, seized the doors of the gates of the city, and the two posts, lifted them up with the bar, put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of the hill, that is before Hebron.

IX. SAMSON IS BETRAYED AND TAKEN CAPTIVE. HIS DEATH.

"Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward; he that wishes to be preserved, let him keep aloof." Prov. xxii. 5.

And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the vale of Sorek whose name was Delilah. And the chiefs of the Philistines came unto her, and said, Entice Samson, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, and bind him; then we will give thee, every one of us, eleven hundred pieces of silver. And Delilah one day said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to be deprived of thy strength. And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven moist cords, that are not yet dry, I should become weak, and be as another man. The Philistines brought her seven moist cords, and she bound him with them (there were men lying in wait in an adjoining room). She now said, The Philistines are upon thee, Samson. And, without using the least exertion, he broke the cords as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. And Delilah said, Behold, thou hast mocked me, having told me untruths; but now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound. He answered her, If they were to bind me with quite new ropes, that never were used for any work, I should become weak, and be as another man. And Delilah took new ropes, bound him therewith, and exclaimed, The Philistines, Samson, the Philis-

tines. And he broke them from his arms like a thread. Then Delilah said unto Samson, Again thou hast mocked me, and told me untruths. But now tell me seriously wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of the hair of my head with the web. She did so. And when she had fastened the pin, she again exclaimed, The Philistines are upon thee, Samson. He awoke, and went away with the pin of the beam. She now said, How canst thou say, I love thee, thy heart not being at all with me; these three times thou hast mocked me, and hast not told me in truth wherein thy great strength lieth. In this manner she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him so, that he well nigh died with vexation. He at length opened his heart unto her, and said to her, See, no razor hath ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazarite unto God from the womb. If I be shaved, then my strength will depart from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man. Now Delilah perceived that he had opened his whole heart to her, and she sent, and had the chiefs of the Philistines called, saying, Come up now, he hath disclosed all to me. The chiefs went up to her, and brought the promised money with them. She lulled him to sleep upon her lap, called for a man, and ordered him to shave off the seven locks of Samson's hair. She thus weakened him, and his strength totally departed from him. And now she exclaimed, The Philistines are upon thee, Samson. He awoke, and wished to resume his strength, for he knew not that the Lord was departed from him.[1] But the Philistines seized him, and put out his eyes, brought him down to Gaza, and there bound him with fetters, and made him grind in prison. One day, the chiefs of the Philistines met to celebrate

[1] As long as mindful of his dignity and of his high vocation, as judge in Israel, he manfully resisted the voice of persuasion, the Lord was with him, and he fell not; for he foresaw the snare that threatened him, and it would still have been time to escape. But when the hero permitted his shield of virtue to be broken, —when he was no longer strong enough to avoid the net of seduction, the Lord departed from him, because he had shown himself weak and unworthy of his divine vocation and sacred rank as a Nazarite of God: but he had severely to atone for his folly. How justly, therefore, says the wise moralist (Prov. xxii. 14), "A seductive mouth is a deep pit; he who is accursed of God (i. e. he from whom God hath withdrawn his guiding hand, because he has made himself unworthy of it) falleth into it." Who is the true hero? He who controls his passions ("Ethics of the Fathers"). And yet, in punishing Samson, an all-wise Providence ordained it so, that vengeance was at the same time inflicted upon the Philistines.

a great feast, in honour of their idol Dagon, and to rejoice; for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson, our enemy, into our hands. And when the people saw Samson, they praised their god, and said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, the destroyer of our country, who slew so many of our's. And when they were right merry, they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they fetched Samson out of the prison, and he made them sport. His hair was gradually grown again. And when they placed him between the pillars, he said to the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars, whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women, amongst them all the chiefs of the Philistines; and there were on the roof about three thousand persons, who beheld Samson making sport. And Samson said, *O Lord, O God, Remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, my God,* that I may be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. He now took hold of the two middle pillars, upon which the house stood, the one with his right hand, and the other with his left hand, and exclaimed, May I then die with the Philistines. And he bent with all his might; and the house fell upon the chiefs, and upon all the people that were therein; so the dead, whom he slew at his death, were more than they whom he had slain in his life. And his brethren, and all his family, went down, took his corpse, carried it up, and buried it in the grave of his father Manoah. He had been judge in Israel for twenty years.

The following is the order of succession of the Judges:

1. Othniel,
2. Ehud,
3. Shamgar,
4. Deborah,
5. Gideon,
6. Abimelech,
7. Thola,
8. Jair,
9. Jeptha,
10. Ibzan,
11. Elon,
12. Abdon, and
13. Samson.

THE BOOK OF RUTH.

מְגִלַּת רוּת

I. RUTH'S CLOSE ATTACHMENT TO HER MOTHER-IN-LAW, AND TO HER RELIGION.

"The Lord is the refuge of the poor, a refuge in time of trouble. In thee trust those who know thy name, for thou forsakest not those who seek thee, O Lord." Psalm ix. 10, 11.

It came to pass, in the time of the Judges, that there was a famine in the land; and a certain man of Bethlehem-Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-Judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there; but Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. They married women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other, Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years. Then Mahlon and Chilion died also; and the woman alone was left, of her two sons and her husband. And she arose, and her daughters-in-law with her, to depart from the country of Moab; for she had heard that the Lord had visited his people, and given them bread; wherefore she removed from the place where she had hitherto been, and her two daughters-in-law with her. When they were on the way to return unto the land of Judah, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, Go, return each to her mother's house. May the Lord show you as much kindness as ye have shown to the dead and to me! May the Lord grant that you find rest again, each of you, in the house of her husband! Naomi kissed them, but they lifted up their voices, and wept. And they said, Nay, but we will return with thee unto thy people. And Naomi said, Pray, return, my daughters, why will ye go with me? Have I any more sons, that they may be your husbands? If even I were to bear any now, would ye tarry for them till they were grown? Would ye, on their account, refuse to marry other men? Nay, my

daughters, it would grieve me only so much the more for your sakes, that the hand of the Lord hath afflicted me. They lifted up their voices, and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law (in token of a farewell), but Ruth stayed with her. Then Naomi said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is returning to her people, and to her gods; do follow her.[1] But Ruth replied, Do not urge me so strongly to leave thee; for whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou abidest, I will abide too; thy people shall henceforth be my people, and thy God also my God. Where thou diest, I will also die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord punish me now and evermore, if even death part thee and me! When Naomi saw that she was so firmly resolved to follow her, she desisted from speaking to her about her return; so they went together unto Bethlehem. When they arrived there, all the citizens were astonished at her, and they said, Should this be Naomi?[2] But she replied, O, call me no more Naomi (the joyful), but call me Mara (the afflicted); for the Almighty hath sorely afflicted me. Full I went hence, and empty hath the Lord brought me home again. Why then will will ye call me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath sent so much misfortune upon me? So Naomi was returned with her daughter-in-law, Ruth, the Moabitess, out of the country of Moab, and they arrived at Bethlehem, in the beginning of the barley-harvest.

II. BOAZ. HIS ESTEEM FOR RUTH, AND HUMANITY TOWARDS HER.

INDUSTRY. CONTENTMENT. FEMALE MODESTY.

"House and riches are inherited from parents, but a prudent (i. e. virtuous) wife is the gift of God." Prov. xix. 14.

NAOMI had a kinsman of her husband's, a noble-minded man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech, and his name was Boaz.

[1] Far from endeavouring to convert her two heathenish daughters-in-law to the Jewish faith, by winning persuasions and alluring promises, the pious Naomi rather dissuades them from it. And this is being truly religious; for the truly religious values the peace of mind, and the happiness of his fellow-men, above all things. An entirely free inclination, a pure sentiment and firm conviction, without any foreign admixture, should and must erect this sanctuary (religion) within man, if it is to endure, and to produce felicity. Thus thought and spoke the pious Naomi, according to the principles of our holy religion. Would that her mode of acting were taken to heart, and imitated at all times!

[2] The citizens having formerly known her in prosperous circumstances, and seeing her now return in so changed a condition.

Ruth, one day, said to Naomi, Permit me to go into the field, and to glean ears of corn after him, in whose sight I shall find favour. And she answered, Go, my daughter. So she went, and came into the field, and gleaned after the reapers. And she happened to come into a part of the field belonging to Boaz. And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem. He said to the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they replied, The Lord bless thee. Boaz asked his servant, who was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this? And he replied, It is the Moabitish woman, who is returned with Naomi from the country of Moab. She said, I pray you, let me glean, and gather after the reapers amongst the sheaves. So she came, and hath continued even from the break of day until now. She is now resting a little in the house. And Boaz said to Ruth, Hearest thou, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, but abide here, by my maidens, and follow them, where they reap in the field. I have already given orders, that they shall not do thee any harm; and when thou art thirsty, go unto the vessels, and drink. Then Ruth fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said, Whereby have I found such favour in thine eyes, that thou shouldst receive me so kindly, seeing I am a stranger? And Boaz replied, and said, I have already been told of all that thou hast done to thy mother-in-law, after thy husband's death; how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy birth, and art gone over to a people which thou didst not know heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come for protection. Then she said, Let me still find favour in thy sight, my lord; thou hast comforted me, and hast spoken to the heart of thy handmaid, who am not even like one of thy servants. And at meal-time, Boaz said to her, Come thou hither, and join us; thou mayest also dip thy bread in vinegar. She sat down beside the reapers; they reached her parched corn, she did eat, was satisfied, and left some. She then arose to gather in the field. And Boaz commanded his young men, and said, Let her also glean among the sheaves, and do not cause her to blush. You may also, on her account, pretend to forget some of the small sheaves, that she may glean them, and do not rebuke her for it. So she gleaned in the field until even. And when she beat out what she had gleaned, it was about an epha of barley. She took it up, went with it into the city, to her mother-in-law, and

brought forth what she had reserved, and gave it to her.[1] And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? Oh, blessed be he, who received thee so kindly! And Ruth answered, The man, in whose field I gleaned to-day, is Boaz. And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, Blessed be he of the Lord, since he doth not withhold his goodness either from the living or from the dead. And Naomi continued, and said, The man is near of kin unto us; he is one of our nearest relatives. Ruth said, He also told me, to follow his servants until they should have ended all his harvest. And Naomi replied, It is good for thee, my daughter, that thou always go out with his maidens, lest any harm should befall thee in another field. So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean, unto the end of the barley and wheat harvest. She then stayed again with her mother-in-law.

III. RUTH MARRIES BOAZ.

Honesty and fidelity meet their reward.
"Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end shall greatly increase."
Job viii. 7.

NAOMI said to her daughter-in-law, My daughter, I should like to seek a resting-place for thee, where it may be well with thee. Behold, our kindred Boaz winnoweth barley to night, in the threshing-floor. Go, therefore, down to him, to the floor; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do. And Ruth did as her mother-in-law had commanded her. And when Boaz had eaten and drank, and his heart was merry, he went into the floor, and lay down there, beside a heap of corn. But when, in the night, he perceived somebody near him, he was afraid, and asked, Who art thou? She answered, I am Ruth, thy handmaid; take me under thy protection, being a near kinsman unto us. And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter. Thy piety, in the present instance, is greater than in the former, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest, for all my fellow-citizens know that thou art a virtuous woman. And now, it

[1] A gratifying proof of her filial affection, and of the honour she showed her beloved mother-in-law. Truly noble dispositions neglect no opportunity of rendering a kind service to their fellow-men.

is true, I am thy near kinsman; but there is one who is a nearer relative than I. To-morrow we shall know: if he will act the part of kinsman, and marry thee, well, let him marry thee;[1] but if he will not marry thee, I will do so, as the Lord liveth. Early in the morning, Boaz said to Ruth, Hold up the apron, which thou wearest. She held it up, and he measured six measures of barley into it. She then went into the city. And when she came to her mother-in-law, she told her all that the man had promised to do unto her. And she said, These six measures of barley he also gave me, for he said to me, Thou shalt not return empty to thy mother-in-law. Then said she, Now sit still, my daughter, for the man will surely not rest until he have finished the matter this day.

Boaz was sitting at the gate, when it happened that the kinsman came by; and Boaz called to him, and said, Come hither, and sit down. And he approached, and sat down. Boaz then took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down. And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, who is returned out of the country of Moab, hath sold the piece of land which belonged to our kinsman, Elimelech; I now apprise you of this, in the presence of those who sit here, in the presence of the elders of my people, so that thou mayest redeem it. If thou wilt redeem it, do so now; but if not, then tell me, for I am immediately after thee (in the right of redemption). And he said, Yes, I will redeem it. Boaz then said, As soon as thou buyest the field out of the hand of Naomi, the duty devolveth upon thee, at the same time, of preserving, through Ruth, the Moabitess (namely, by marrying her), the wife of the deceased, the name of the deceased upon his inheritance, that it may not be extinct from Israel. And the kinsman said, Then I cannot redeem it. Perform thou, therefore, my duty as kinsman, for thyself. So Boaz undertook the redemption, and said to the elders and to all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought out of the hand of Naomi, all that was Elimelech's, Chilion's, and Mahlon's; moreover, that I have purchased to wife Ruth, the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, to preserve the name of

[1] It was a legal practice in Israel, that the nearest of kin to the deceased proprietor of an estate, who had not left any issue, married his widow, in order to take possession of the family heritage, and thus to preserve the name and the house of the deceased among the community, as also appears from the sequel of the history.

the dead upon his inheritance; that it be not extinct from among his relatives, and from his native place. And all the people present said, We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman that is come into thy house, like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build up the house of Israel; that thy power may increase in Ephraim, and thy name spread in Bethlehem; and may thy house flourish, through the progeny which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman. So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And when she had born him a son, the women said to Naomi, Blessed be the Lord, who shall henceforth not let thee be wanting a support. May his name become famous in Israel! He shall surely raise thy broken spirit, and make thine old age comfortable; for he is born of thy daughter-in-law, who loveth thee so much, and who is better to thee than seven sons. Naomi took the child, put it in her lap, and became his nurse. Her neighbours gave the child a name, which was to signify, This son was born for Naomi. They therefore called him *Obed* (one who serves, attends on another). This Obed, subsequently, was the father of *Jesse*, who was the father of *David*.

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL.

סֵפֶר שְׁמוּאֵל

I. BIRTH OF SAMUEL, AND HIS CONSECRATION TO THE HOLY SERVICE. THE PRIEST AND JUDGE ELI.

DEVOTION. CONFIDENCE IN GOD. GRATITUDE TOWARDS GOD.

After the death of Samson, the priest Eli exercised the function of judge in Israel. At the same time, there was a certain man at Ramathaim-Zophim, whose name was Elkanah, and who had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none. Elkanah loved Hannah, but her rival (Peninnah) provoked her greatly, and tried to mortify

her, in that the Lord had left her without children. And when, according to an annual custom, she went up with Elkanah to Shiloh, to worship the Lord, and to sacrifice to him, and her husband saw her so dejected, that she wept, and did not eat any thing, he said to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart so grieved? Am not I better to thee than ten children? One day, after they had eaten and drank in Shiloh, she rose, and prayed unto the Lord. And her soul was troubled, and she wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy handmaid, if thou wilt remember me, and forget me not, but wilt give me, thy handmaid, a male child, he shall be devoted to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head. And as she thus continued praying before the Lord, Eli, the priest, who was sitting at a door of the temple of the Lord, observed her mouth; for Hannah spoke in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard; therefore Eli thought she was drunken. And he said to her, How long wilt thou be like drunken? Put away thy intoxication from thee. But Hannah answered, and said, No, my lord; I am a woman of a sorrowful mind; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Do not look upon thy servant as base. Verily, out of the abundance of my affliction and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered her, and said, Go in peace; and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. She replied, So let thy servant still find grace in thy sight. And she went her way, partook of some food, and her countenance was no more sad.[1] The following morning they rose up early, and worshipped before the Lord; and returned, and came home to Ramah. After some time, the Lord remembered Hannah; she bore a son, and called his name *Samuel*.[2] And Elkanah, and all his house, now went up again, as usual, to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifices and vows. But Hannah refused to join them; for she said to her husband, I will not go up until the boy be weaned, and then I will take him up with me, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever. Elkanah answered her, and said, Do what seemeth thee good. So the

[1] Because she had relieved her mind by prayer; for the power of prayer is very great: it mitigates grief, encourages the soul to hope, and comforts it.

[2] Which in Hebrew signifies, "I have obtained him by praying to the Lord."

woman stayed at home, and nursed her son, until she had weaned him. And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her to Shiloh, to the house of the Lord. The boy was brought to Eli, and Hannah said to him, Pardon, my lord, I am the woman that once stood here by thee, praying unto the Lord. For this boy here I prayed, and the Lord hath granted me my petition, which I asked of him; therefore, also, I have dedicated him to the Lord, and as long as he liveth he shall be consecrated to the Lord. Samuel then worshipped the Lord.

And Hannah prayed, and said,

"In thee my heart rejoiceth, O Lord;
Through thee, O Lord, my spirits are revived.
I triumph over mine enemies,
Because I rejoice in thy salvation.
None is holy but thou, O Lord;
For there is none beside thee,
No rock so strong as our God.
Talk no more so exceeding proudly,
Let no arrogance escape your mouth;
For the Lord is a God of knowledge,
And by him all actions are weighed.
The bowstring of the mighty relaxeth,
While the weak are girt with renewed strength;
They that were surfeited, now serve for bread,
While the hungry have ceased to starve;
The barren beareth seven times,
While she of many children is consumed with grief.
The Lord slayeth, and giveth life;
He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.
The Lord maketh poor and rich;
Humbleth, and elevateth:
He raiseth the lowly from the dust,
And lifteth up the needy from the dunghill;
To place him beside princes,
To let him inherit the throne of honour;
For the Lord's are the pillars of the earth,
Upon which he hath founded the world.
He guardeth the feet of his saints,
But the wicked perish in darkness;
For not by his own strength doth man prevail.

The adversaries of the Lord shall be dashed to pieces;
Out of heaven shall he thunder upon them.
The Lord judgeth to the farthest corners of the earth:
To his King he giveth victory,
And exalteth the power of his Anointed."

Elkanah now returned home, with all his household; but the boy remained, as minister of the Lord, under the care of Eli, the priest. And he ministered unto the Lord, being yet a child, and wore an ephod of linen (cloak). And his mother every year made him a little cloak, which she brought with her from year to year, when she came up with her husband, to offer the yearly sacrifice. So the child Samuel grew up in the service of the Lord.

II. DEPRAVITY OF THE SONS OF ELI. DIVINE PUNISHMENT ANNOUNCED TO THE HOUSE OF ELI ON THAT ACCOUNT.

"Chastise thy son while there is hope, and let not his crying excite thy compassion." Prov. xix. 18.

But the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were evil minded, and knew not the Lord. They abused their ministry by their mischievous conduct, with regard to the sacrifices which the people offered, and led a vicious course of life, wherefore their sin was very great before the Lord. Now Eli was very old, and had to hear how his sons committed themselves towards all Israel. And he said to them, Why do ye such things, as I hear of your evil dealings of all the people? Nay, my sons, the report is not good which I hear spread of you by the people of the Lord. *If one man offend another, the judge decideth; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall then plead his cause?* But they did not listen to the voice of their father. And a divine man came to Eli, and said, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I thought thou and thy father's house would walk before me for ever; but now, that ye disregard my service, in treating my sacrifices and meat-offerings with slight, now, be it far from me: *for them that honour me, I will honour; but they that despise me, shall be slighted.* I will cut off thy house, that there shall not be an old man in thy house, but all thy offspring shall die in the flower of their

age.[1] And that which shall come upon thy two sons, namely, that they shall die, both of them in one day, may be a sign to thee.[2] But I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall act according to my heart, and according to my mind; and him I will erect a lasting house, that he may walk before mine anointed for ever.

III. FIRST DIVINE REVELATION TO SAMUEL.

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, unless he have previously revealed his counsel to his servants, the prophets." Amos iii. 7.

THE young Samuel, meanwhile, grew up, and he was daily more beloved by God and men. And he ministered unto the Lord, as usual, under the superintendence of Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there was no spread of prophecy. One day, when Eli was lying down in his place (his eyes began to be dim, and he could no more see), and ere the lamp of God in the temple, where the ark of God was, and where Samuel was asleep, was extinguished, the Lord called Samuel. And he answered, Here am I. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; thou calledst me. Eli said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the Lord called again, Samuel. And Samuel again arose, went to Eli, and said, Thou didst call me, here am I. Eli answered, I called thee not, my son; lie down again. Samuel did not yet know the voice of the Lord, the word of the Lord not having as yet been revealed to him. And the Lord called a third time, Samuel. He again went to Eli, and said, Here am I, for thou didst call me. Eli now perceived that the Lord had called the youth; therefore, he said to Samuel, Go, lie down again; and if the voice should call to thee again, say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the Lord came and called as before, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak, for thy servant heareth. And the

[1] How much sorrow and misfortune can degenerate children bring upon their parents! Through the depravity of the sons of Eli, a whole priestly family perishes. May this history be an admonition to all children, showing them the sad consequences of a violation of the laws of religion and virtue, and of disobedience to parents! But let parents, too, learn therefrom, to what melancholy results untimely indulgence and indifference to the education of their children can lead. Admonition is afterwards too late.

[2] That is, that the threatened punishment shall come to pass.

Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which, both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In due time I will perform against Eli all that I have determined to bring upon his house. And I herewith announce to him, that I will punish his house for ever, for the iniquity, in that he knew the vile conduct of his sons, and restrained them not. I have therefore sworn unto the house of Eli, that his sin shall never be forgiven, neither by sacrifice nor by meat-offering. And Samuel lay until the morning. When he opened the doors of the temple (he feared, from a delicate feeling towards Eli, to apprise him of the vision), Eli called him, and said, What is it that the Lord hath said unto thee? I pray thee, conceal it not from me. May God punish thee now and hereafter, if thou conceal ought from me, of all that he said unto thee. And Samuel told him every thing; and Eli said, He is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good to him. Samuel rose high; the Lord was with him, and left none of his words unfulfilled. And all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was a true prophet of the Lord.

IV. THE PUNISHMENT PREDICTED COMES TO PASS.

"For the work of man he rendereth unto him; and according to a man's way, so he meeteth with (either good or bad fortune)." Job xxxiv. 11.

The Israelites went against the Philistines to battle, and were defeated, so that they were obliged to flee; at the same time, the ark of the covenant was taken in the spoil, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, fell.[1] And a man of Benjamin ran from the field of battle, and came to Shiloh, with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head. Eli was sitting upon a seat by the wayside, watching; for his heart was uneasy on account of the ark of God. He was ninety and eight years old, and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. And the man came into the city with his intelligence, and all the

[1] In other men, and under other circumstances, such a death would not be looked upon as a punishment, but as a reward; for to die in battle, particularly for a holy cause, and for our country, is an honourable death, which ensures the fame and praise of a hero. But, in this instance, after the previously threatened punishment, and the taking of the ark of the covenant, the death of these two vicious ministers of God, was a heavy, though well-merited punishment, the harder, for having to suffer an ignominious death, without repentance and amendment, in a defeat by the heathenish Philistines.

city raised a loud cry. And the messenger told Eli that there had been a great slaughter among the people, that his two sons had perished, and that the ark of God was taken. When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward off the chair, and died. He had judged Israel forty years. And when his daughter-in-law, Phineas's wife, who was near to be delivered of a child, learned that the ark of God was taken, and that her husband and her father-in-law were dead, she was delivered, and died. And she named the child I-Chabod (i. e. where is the glory?), saying, The glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken.

V. DIVINE MIRACLES IN CONNECTION WITH THE ARK OF THE COVENANT. THE PHILISTINES ACKNOWLEDGE THE AVENGING HAND OF GOD, AND SEND BACK THE HOLY ARK, WITH AN OFFERING OF ATONEMENT.

"And the stranger who approacheth shall suffer death." Num. iii. 10.

The Philistines brought the ark of God into the temple of Dagon, in Ashdod, where they placed it beside Dagon. And when the people of Ashdod arose in the morning, Dagon was lying on the earth, before the ark of God. They took him up, and set him in his place again. And when they again came into the temple the following morning, Dagon was again lying on the ground before the ark of the Lord; but his head and his hands were cut off, and lay on the threshold. And the hand of the Lord was heavy (i. e. he inflicted punishment) upon the inhabitants of Ashdod, therefore they sent the ark of God to Gath; but the inhabitants of that town having been likewise greatly afflicted by the Lord on its account, the ark of God was taken to Ekron. But the Ekronites also cried out, saying, They have brought us the ark of the Jewish God, to cause us to perish. Then all the chiefs of the Philistines met, and resolved to send the ark of the Lord back to Israel; for the ravages of death increased, the hand of the Lord lying heavy upon the people. And the ark of the Lord having been in the country of the Philistines seven months, they sent it back in the following manner. At the advice of their priests, they had five golden emerods, and five golden mice[1] made, and

[1] Because their plagues consisted of emerods and mice.

put them, as an offering of atonement, into a box; they then took a new cart, tied it to two young kine, on which there had as yet come no yoke, and put the ark with the box upon it. And the kine went the straight way towards Beth-shemesh (a Jewish frontier town), without deviating either right or left. The inhabitants of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat-harvest in the valley; and when they lifted up their eyes, and beheld the ark, they rejoiced to see it. The cart came into the field of Joshua, of Beth-shemesh, and stopped there. And a great stone was lying there. They clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt-offering to the Lord. And the Levites had taken down the ark of the Lord, and the box in which were the golden jewels, and had put them on the great stone. And the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh offered burnt-offerings and sacrifices, the same day, unto the Lord. But the Lord punished the people of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord, so that many of them died. The people lamented, because the Lord had smitten them with so great a slaughter. And the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh said, Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God? And to whom of us shall it (the ark) now be brought up? They therefore sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-Jearim, saying, The Philistines have sent back to us the ark of God; come and fetch it up to you. And the men of Kirjath-Jearim came and took up with them the ark of the Lord, placed it in the house of Abinadab, and left it in the charge of his son Eleazar.

VI. AMENDMENT AND REPENTANCE OF THE ISRAELITES, AND THE VICTORY WHICH THEY IN CONSEQUENCE OBTAINED, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF SAMUEL, OVER THEIR ENEMIES.

PRAYER. SACRIFICE. GOD GRANTS THEIR SUPPLICATION.

The ark of God remained in Kirjath-Jearim twenty years; and the house of Israel once more walked in the ways of the Lord. But Samuel spoke unto all the people of Israel, If ye will return unto the Lord, with all your hearts (sincerely), remove the strange gods from amidst you; direct your hearts wholly to the Lord, and serve him only;[1] and so he will

[1] The first and most necessary rule for the reformation of a guilty life, is to avoid sin, and carefully to eradicate its pernicious roots. The power of habit is

deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel removed the idols, and served the Lord only. And Samuel said, Let all Israel meet at Mizpeh, and there I will pray for you unto the Lord. They met at Mizpeh, drew water, and poured it out before the Lord; fasted that whole day, and said, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged Israel in Mizpeh. And when the Philistines heard that the Israelites had met at Mizpeh, the chiefs of the Philistines went up against them. The children of Israel heard it, and were afraid of them. And they said to Samuel, Cease not to pray for us unto the Lord our God, that he may assist us against the power of the Philistines. Samuel took a young lamb, and offered it up for a burnt-offering, in honour of the Lord; he also prayed for Israel, and the Lord heard him. While Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines advanced to battle against Israel. But the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, so that they were thrown into confusion, and discomfited before Israel. And the men of Israel left Mizpeh, pursued the Philistines, and smote them. Then Samuel took a stone, and set it on the spot where the victory had taken place, and called it Stone of Help; for he said, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.[1] So the Philistines were totally subdued, and they came no more into the boundaries of Israel, for the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. And Samuel continued to judge Israel. From year to year he went in circuit unto Beth-El, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. He then returned to Ramah, for there was his residence, and there, too, he judged the people. In that place he had also built an altar to the Lord.

certainly great, but that of religion is greater; and that guardian angel at his side, man can do much, nay, every thing, provided his good resolve be firm and confiding, and his will holy. The solacing aid of God will then not fail; of this the present instance affords a proof, though Holy Writ contains many more, if we would but attend to them. Thus the royal Psalmist also teaches us: "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he showeth the erring the right path." Psalm xxv. 8.

[1] Thus should we, too, erect within us a monument of gratitude after each calamity from which we have been delivered, that we may ever be reminded thereby of the aid of the bountiful Deliverer; that we may never forget, that all help and all bounty proceeds from him, the father of love and mercy; and that without his blessing nothing will prosper, and without his assistance nothing can be accomplished.

VII. DEGENERACY OF THE SONS OF SAMUEL, WHEREFORE THE PEOPLE DEMAND A KING. SAMUEL, BY THE COMMAND OF GOD, ANOINTS SAUL AS KING.

When Samuel was old, he made his sons judges in Israel. But they walked not in his ways; they were greedy of lucre, accepted bribes, and perverted justice. Then all the elders of Israel met, and came to Samuel, to Ramah, and said to him, Behold, thou art now old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; therefore, appoint a king over us, to judge us like all the nations. And the thing displeased Samuel very much, and he prayed unto the Lord.[1]

But the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people, and set a king over them. At that time, a goodly young man, the like of whom was not found in all Israel, and whose name was Saul, son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, came into the city, where Samuel dwelt, in consequence of the following circumstance. The asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost; and when Saul was gone out to look for them, he went to the seer, that is, the prophet, to inquire of him where the asses were; for it was the custom in those days to apply to the prophet in the like cases. A day before Saul's arrival, the Lord had already spoken to Samuel, and said, To-morrow I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and him thou shalt anoint as ruler over my people Israel; he shall aid my people against the power of the Philistines; for I have looked upon my people, and their cry is come unto me. And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord intimated to him that this was the man of whom he had spoken. As it happened, that there was a great feast at the prophet's at the time, Samuel made Saul sit among the chief of his guests; he then took him aside,

[1] It also greatly displeased the Lord (as we are expressly told, the Lord said to Samuel, "Not thee, but me they have rejected to be king over them"), because this demand betrayed a certain pride, as well as distrust in God; as if God could not always have rendered them assistance, and guided them best without a king. The prophet, however, was commanded by God to comply with the people's desire. God allows whole nations, as well as individuals, to act according to their free will, showing them the way to happiness, warning them, and guiding them, like a father, though their conduct displease him. Nevertheless, the punishment consequent upon their follies and transgression never fails to meet them.

took a vial of oil, and poured oil upon his head, kissed him, and said, Behold, the Lord herewith anointeth thee to be ruler over his people. Samuel next convened the people before the Lord, at Mizpeh. Here Samuel presented Saul, the son of Kish, to the people. And when Saul stood among them, he projected from his shoulder upwards, above all the people. Samuel addressed the people, and said, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen? None is like him among all the people. And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. Then Samuel explained to the people the laws of government, which he inscribed in a book, and deposited before the Lord. And he dismissed all the people, every man to his home.

VIII. SAUL, A BRAVE GENERAL. SECOND ACKNOWLEDGMENT AS KING. SAMUEL'S ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

"Mercy and truth preserve the king; and his throne is upholden by virtue." Prov. xx. 28.

About that time, Nahash, the Ammonite, came up against Jabesh, and besieged it, so that the inhabitants of that city were in great straits. For they had said to Nahash, Let us form an alliance with thee. But he said, I will agree to it on this condition, that I may thrust out the right eye of each of you, and thus throw an insult upon Israel. Then they sent up to Saul for succour. When the messengers arrived at Gibeah, and Saul and the people heard the words of Nahash, they lifted up their voices, and wept. And when Saul, who came after the herd out of the field, heard the tidings of the men of Jabesh, the spirit of God came upon him, and he was exceedingly angry. And he took a yoke of oxen, and cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout the whole territory of Israel, by the hands of the messengers, who were ordered to say, Whosoever cometh not forth to join Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the Lord fell upon the people, and they came out with one consent. And Saul mustered them in Bezek, and their number amounted to three hundred and thirty thousand. The messengers reported this to the people of Jabesh, and they were rejoiced. And it was on the morrow that Saul led the army in three divisions against the Ammonites, and totally defeated them. Then the people said to

Samuel, Whosoever said, " Shall Saul be our king?" (for there had been several malcontents among the people) bring him hither, that we may put him to death. But Saul replied, This day no man shall be put to death, for to-day the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel (i. e. hath caused them to triumph). Then Samuel said to the people, Come, let us go to Gilgal, and renew there our homage to the king. And all the people went to Gilgal, and paid homage to Saul, before the Lord; and there Saul, as well as all Israel, greatly rejoiced. And Samuel said to the people, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice, and appointed a king over you. But ye have greatly sinned against the Lord, in having demanded a king over you, seeing that the Lord your God is your king. And now approach, and behold this great thing which the Lord will perform before your eyes. Is it not wheat-harvest to-day? But I will pray unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain. Thereby ye may perceive and see that ye have greatly offended, in asking for a king. So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day. And all the people paid great veneration to the Lord, and to Samuel. And they said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to have asked for a king. And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not; it is true ye have committed this wrong; but only turn not any more from the Lord, and serve him with all your heart. Turn ye not, for then you would go only after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver, because they are vain. But the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake; since it hath pleased him to make you his people. Moreover, as for me, be it far from me, so to sin against the Lord, as to cease praying for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way. Only fear the Lord, serve him in truth, and with all your heart; for consider what great things he hath done for you. But if ye act wickedly, both you and your king shall be consumed.

IX. SAUL'S FURTHER VICTORIES OVER THE PHILISTINES, AND OTHER NEIGHBOURING NATIONS. VALOUR OF HIS SON JONATHAN.

THE Philistines gathered themselves together to make war upon Israel, with a vast number of men and chariots. But Saul had only about six hundred men to oppose to the Philistines. One day, Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, Come, let us go over secretly to the garrison of the Philistines, it may be that the Lord will work for us; for nothing restraineth the Lord to save by many or by few. And his armour-bearer said unto him, Do according to thy pleasure; I remain with thee. And Jonathan climbed up the rock upon his hands and feet, slew every thing before him, and his armour-bearer slew after him. They killed in all about twenty men. And there was a great consternation in the camp among the people, as well as among the garrison. When the watchmen of Saul discovered this, they reported it to him. And he broke up with all the people that were with him, a battle ensued, the Philistines were discomfited, and compelled to retreat. So the Lord granted Israel that day a complete triumph, and Saul built an altar unto the Lord. But as for Jonathan, Saul gave orders that he should be put to death, having discovered that he had tasted honey in the wood, being very faint; and Saul had charged the people with an oath, saying, "No one shall eat any food this day."[1] And the people said unto Saul, What! shall Jonathan die, who hath obtained this great victory for Israel? Be that far from us. As the Lord liveth, not a hair of his head shall fall to the ground; for, next to God, it was his work this day; so the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not. Saul defended his rulership over Israel, and fought against all his enemies, on every side; and whithersoever he turned, he spread terror: so he delivered Israel out of the hands of its oppressors.

[1] Being a day on which the people were to be solely occupied in pursuing the enemy, without permitting themselves to be in any way interrupted.

X. SAUL MAKES WAR UPON AMALEK. HIS TRANSGRESSION, ON ACCOUNT OF WHICH, SAMUEL FORETELLS HIM THE DOWNFALL OF HIS GOVERNMENT.

"Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High: and call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thus shalt thou honour me." Psalm l. 13—15.

About that time, Samuel spoke to Saul as follows: Thus saith the Lord Zebaoth, I remember what Amalek did to Israel, when they departed from Egypt. Now go thither, and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare nothing from man to beast. And Saul called together his forces, amounting to two hundred and ten thousand men. And when he came to a city of the Amalekites, he sent word to the Kenites, saying, Depart ye from among Amalek, lest I destroy you with them; for ye showed kindness to the people of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt: so the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. And Saul defeated the Amalekites, took their king Agag alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep and of the oxen, and would not utterly destroy them.[1] Saul now returned, and went down to Gilgal. And when Samuel came to him there, he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, I have performed the commandment of the Lord. But Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the oxen, which I hear? And Saul replied, The people have brought them with them from the Amalekites, having spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord their God; all the rest we have utterly destroyed. And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying his voice? *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken preferable to the fat of rams; but disobedience is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as revolt and idolatry.* Because thou hast despised the word of the Lord, he deemeth thee unworthy to be king. Then Saul said to Samuel, I have sinned, in having transgressed the

[1] Probably, from covetousness, perhaps intending to offer a portion to the Lord, and to retain the greater portion as a booty for themselves.

commandment of the Lord, and thy words, in having feared the people, and obeyed their voice.[1] Now, therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may prostrate myself before the Lord, and worship him. Samuel refused, and turned about to go away; but Saul seized him by the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said to him, Thus hath the Lord rent the rulership over Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to thy fellow-man, who is better than thou art. And the Preserver of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent. Then said Saul, I have sinned; yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel; and return with me, that I may worship the Lord. So Samuel accompanied Saul back, and Saul worshipped the Lord. Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up unto his house to Gibeah-Saul (i. e. hill of Saul).

XI. SAMUEL ANOINTS DAVID AS KING.

"The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich; humbleth and elevateth." 1 Sam. ii. 7.

THE Lord said to Samuel, Fill thy vessel with oil, and go to Jesse, the Bethlehemite, for I have selected me a king from among his sons. And Samuel did so. And when Jesse presented his sons to him, the Lord said to Samuel, Look not on countenance, and height of stature; for man's sight is as nought: *Man looketh* only *on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel; and Samuel said, The Lord hath not chosen amongst these. And he continued, and said, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest; he is keeping the sheep. Samuel said, Send and fetch him. And he sent, and had him brought in. Now the youth was ruddy, of a graceful appearance and beautiful figure. The Lord said, Arise, anoint him, for it is he whom I have chosen. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him amidst his brethren; after this he went back to Ramah. From that day

[1] He who fears men more than God, can never escape sin and iniquity; for therein consists the true fear of the Lord, that we honestly and conscientiously practise what is right and good, without heeding the censure or hatred of man. Saul brought misfortune upon himself and others, because he feared men more than God.

forward the spirit of the Lord came upon David, and abode with him; but from Saul, the divine (good) spirit departed, and an evil spirit from God troubled him. One day, Saul's servants said to him, Let our lord command thy servants, to seek out a man who is skilful in playing on the harp. And it shall be, when the evil spirit from God (i. e. melancholy) is upon thee, that he shall play before thee, and thou shalt be well. And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me then such a man, as can play well, and bring him to me. Then answered one of the servants, and said, I know a son of Jesse, the Bethlemite, he understandeth to play the harp; he also is a valiant man, experienced in war, and prudent in matters; at the same time, he is of comely person, and the Lord is with him. Wherefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, saying, Send me hither thy son David, who is with the sheep. And Jesse took an ass, loaded it with bread, with a bottle of wine, and with a kid, and sent it by his son David to Saul. David came to Saul; he was presented to him; Saul became attached to him, and made him his armour-bearer.[1] He then sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, thy son, stay with me, for he hath found favour in my sight. And whenever the evil spirit of God was upon Saul, David took his harp, and played; this comforted Saul, he felt better, and the evil spirit (melancholy) departed from him.

XII. DAVID VANQUISHES GOLIATH.

"The king is not saved by the multitude of a host; the mighty man is not delivered by his great strength. Behold the eye of the Lord looketh on those who fear him, on those who confide in his goodness." Psalm xxxiii. 16, 18.

Now the Philistines gathered together to make war upon Israel, and Saul, too, assembled his troops, and encamped over against the Philistines. The armies were stationed on two opposite mountains, between which lay a valley. And there stepped forth a giant, out of the camp of the Philistines. His height was six cubits and a span; he had a helmet of brass on his head; and he was clad in a coat of mail, the weight of which was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and carried a spear of brass, the shaft of which was

[1] What an all-wise and wonderful disposition of the Lord! Saul himself had to send for David, the intended king, that he might become acquainted with the royal court, and the business of government.

like a weaver's beam, and the spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. His armour-bearer preceded him. And he stood and called unto the army of Israel, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array, ye servants of Saul? Choose you a man from among you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. At the same time, he insulted the army of Israel. When Saul and Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and feared greatly. Now the eldest three sons of Jesse were with Saul in the camp, but David, from time to time, went back from Saul to Bethlehem, to tend his father's sheep. One day, Jesse said to his son David, Take this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run with them to the camp, to thy brethren; and carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of the army, and then inquire after the welfare of thy brethren, and take their pledge (as a token of their being well). David did according as his father desired him. And when he came to the camp, and was speaking with his brethren, behold there came forth the giant (he was of Gath), and repeated his usual words. David listened attentively. And he asked the men that stood by him, What would be done to the man who should kill this Philistine, and remove the reproach from Israel? For who is this heathenish Philistine that he should dare to insult the armies of the living God? And the people answered David, saying, Whoever killeth him, the king will make him rich presents, give him his daughter, and grant his family exemption from all kind of tribute or service. When his eldest brother, Eliab, heard what he had spoken to the men, his anger was kindled against David, and he said to him, Why camest thou down hither, and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? Oh, I know thy pride and thy naughtiness. Thou art come down but to see the battle. David replied, What have I now done; I have but spoken words? Meanwhile, David's words were repeated to Saul, and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail, because of that Philistine; I, thy servant, will go and fight with him. And Saul said unto David, Thou art not able to fight with this Philistine, for thou art but a lad, and he a man of war from his youth. David replied, Thy servant kept his father's sheep; and there came sometimes a lion, or a

bear, and carried off a lamb out of the flock. I pursued him, threw him down, and tore the prey from him; and when the beast arose against me, I caught him by his hair, and smote him, and slew him. Thus thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and the Philistine shall meet the like fate, seeing he hath insulted the army of the living God. The Lord, continued he, who assisted me against the lion and the bear, he will also aid me against this Philistine. Saul said to David, Go then, and the Lord be with thee. Saul now clothed David with his clothes, put a helmet of brass upon his head, and armed him with a coat of mail; and David girded his sword upon his armour. But when David tried to go thus equipped, he said to Saul, I cannot go in this armour, for I am not used to it; and so David put it off him again. And he went, and took his staff in his hand, and chose for himself five smooth stones out of the brook, put them in his shepherd's bag, took his sling in his hand, and thus drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine slowly advanced towards David, his shield-bearer preceding him. When he looked about, and saw David, he disdained him, and said, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And he cursed David by his gods. And he said to him, Come to me, that I may give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast insulted. This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand; and I will slay thee, and cut thy head from off thee; and I will give the corpses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and unto the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know the power of the God of Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands. And when the Philistine arose, and advanced towards David, David hastened, and ran to meet him, put his hand into his bag, took thence a stone, slang it, and hit the Philistine in his forehead; the stone sank deeply into it, and he fell forward down to the ground. David ran up to him, and took his sword, and drew it out of its sheath, and cut off his head. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. Hereupon the men of Israel arose, raised a shout of war, and pursued the Philis-

tines unto the towns of Sharaim and Ekron, so that the road was covered with the slain of the Philistines. After this, Abner, the general of Saul, brought David before Saul. Subsequently David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but the armour of Goliath he put in his tent.

XIII. DAVID AND JONATHAN'S CLOSE ATTACHMENT. SAUL'S JEALOUSY OF DAVID. HIS HATRED OF DAVID, AND HIS DESIGN TO ASSASSINATE HIM. DAVID'S FLIGHT.

"A virtuous man has faithful friends, because his friends are like himself." Sirach.

THENCEFORTH Saul kept David about him, and would let him go home no more to his father's house. But Jonathan's soul was attached to that of David, and he loved him as himself. And Jonathan stript himself of his robe, and gave it to David; he also gave him his other garments, and his sword, his bow, and his girdle. David undertook several expeditions, and was successful, wherever Saul sent him. Saul, therefore, set him over the men of war; and he was beloved by the people, as well as by the servants of Saul. And when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, the women came out of all cities of Israel to meet king Saul, with song and dance, with tabrets, with shouts of joy, and with instruments of music. The women who played, sang alternately, "*Saul hath slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands.*" And Saul was very angry; these words displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands; now he wanteth but the crown: from that day forward Saul was jealous of David.[1] The following morning the evil spirit from God came upon Saul; and David, as usual, played on the harp. And

[1] Since that disastrous day, on which Samuel had announced to Saul the Lord's displeasure with his conduct, regarding the spoil of the Amalekites, and the dreadful sentence, "The Lord henceforth deemeth thee and thy house unworthy of the government," the happiness and cheerfulness of the unfortunate king was gone. Remorse for the wrong committed, and the contemplation of a sad future, tortured him, and brought on a profound melancholy. This disordered state of mind led to more evil deeds (amongst them was his unjust hostility towards David), all of which must be looked upon as the consequence of his first transgression. How just, therefore, is the saying of the sage (in the Ethics of the Fathers), "One sin leadeth to another, and the punishment of vice is the vice itself!"

Saul cast the javelin at David, to kill him; but David evaded it twice. Saul, hereupon, removed him from his presence, and made him a captain over a thousand. He prospered in all his ways, for the Lord was with him. And Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. This was reported unto Saul, and it pleased him. But his courtiers were ordered to commune with David secretly, and to tell him, that the king desired no other dowry than the slaying of a hundred Philistines,[1] to be avenged of the king's enemies. (Saul's aim was that David should fall by the hands of the Philistines.) David, therefore, arose, and went with his men, slew two hundred Philistines, sent the proofs thereof to the king, whereupon he gave him Michal, his daughter, to wife. Saul now clearly saw that the Lord was with David; he therefore was yet the more afraid of him, and became his enemy for ever. And he gave Jonathan, and all his servants, to understand, that he was determined to kill David. But Jonathan informed David thereof, that he might conceal himself. And he said to his father, Let not the king sin against his servant David; he hath surely not sinned against thee, but, on the contrary, his deeds were very useful to you. Behold, he put his life in jeopardy, and slew the Philistine; the Lord, thereby, conferred a great victory upon Israel; thou sawest it, and didst rejoice. Wherefore, then, wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause? And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan, and swore, As the Lord liveth, David shall not die. David now was again about Saul as formerly. And he again went out and fought with the Philistines, and totally defeated them. One day, as the evil spirit was again come upon Saul, and David was playing upon his harp before him, Saul threw his javelin at David; but he slipped away, so that the javelin stuck into the wall. David fled, and escaped that same night. Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, there to watch him, and to slay him in the morning; but his wife, Michal, let him down through the window, so David fled and escaped. He stayed with Samuel at Ramah. And when Saul persecuted

[1] The mind of the unfortunate king was already so strongly possessed of envy and melancholy, that he either quite forgot, or did not wish to remember, the promise he had made of giving his daughter to him who should slay Goliath. Hence, too, David might possibly have considered that promise as a mere gossipping addition of the people who gave utterance to it, and therefore, fulfilling the conditions required, he strove to obtain the hand of the royal daughter in this manner.

him even there, David again fled, and had a private conference with Jonathan. The latter had told David, To-morrow is new moon; my father will inquire after thee at table; and if I discover that my father really intendeth to slay thee, I will inform thee of it. And he entered with David into an agreement, saying, I will come with my lad to meet thee in the field, and shoot three arrows at a mark; if, then, I say to the lad, "Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee," then thou mayest come, and hast nothing to fear; but if I say, "The arrows are beyond thee," then go thy way, for the Lord biddeth thee flee. And, as touching the matter which we have spoken of, let the Lord be witness between me and thee, for ever. When, after this, Jonathan, being at table with his father, again interceded with him for David; Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, Perverse, rebellious son, I know it but too well that thou favourest the son of Jesse to thine own shame, and to the shame of thy mother who bore thee; for as long as the son of Jesse liveth on earth, thou and thy government shall not endure. And in saying this, he cast a javelin at Jonathan. Jonathan now knew that it was determined of his father to slay David. And he arose from the table full of vexation. The following day he went with his lad into the field, gave David the appointed signal, and then sent the lad back again. David came up to Jonathan, they embraced and kissed each other, and both of them wept, but David especially wept very much. Jonathan said to David, Go in peace; what we have sworn to by the name of the Lord, let that last between us and our children for ever.[1]

[1] What a pattern of nobility of sentiment and of disinterested friendship is afforded to us in the character of Jonathan! He is aware that David is about to obtain the kingdom, which was due to him, as the son of the king; nevertheless, he is devotedly and faithfully attached to his friend. But Jonathan feared the Lord; all his expressions prove this; hence his sense of virtue was immoveable, and his friendship firm and holy. He is not allured by the dazzling prospect of a crown and dominion. And thus it is clearly shown to us, that religion is the mother of all virtues; that she imparts light and warmth to all the nobler faculties of the mind, and animates them to good actions.

XIV. DAVID'S FURTHER FLIGHT. TREASON. THE FATE OF NOB, THE CITY OF PRIESTS.

"A talebearer revealeth secrets." Prov. xi. 13.
"Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Prov. xviii. 21.

DAVID fled to Nob, to the priest Achimelech; but Achimelech knew not that David was fled before Saul. David said to Achimelech, Hast thou not some bread near thee? And the priest replied, I have no common bread, but there is hallowed bread, if thy young men would but keep it clean. David answered, and said, Give it me, and it shall be kept clean in the vessels. So the priest gave him hallowed bread, viz. the shew-bread, that was taken from before the Lord to put fresh bread in its place. And David again said, Hast thou not also a sword about thee? And the priest replied, The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it lieth here wrapped in a cloth, beneath the ephod (holy garment); if thou wilt have that, take it. David said, There is none like it, give it me. But one of the servants of Saul, the chief of his herdsmen, was at Nob that day; his name was Doeg. David fled thence, and came to Achish, the king of Gath. And the servants of Achish said, Is not this David, the chief in the country, of whom they sang in the triumphal dances, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?" And David laid up these words in his heart, and was afraid of Achish. He therefore feigned insanity, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see this man is insane; have I need of madmen, that ye have brought this man to me to play the madman in my presence? Hereupon David was dismissed.[1] David now departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam. When his brethren and his family heard this, they went down thither to him. Here he was joined by all kinds of distressed people, about four hundred in number, whose captain he became. And he went to the king of Moab, and said to him, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, live amongst you, until I know what God will do for me. He then brought his parents before the king, and they dwelt there.

[1] This happy escape gave rise to the beautiful and instructive 34th Psalm.

But Doeg informed Saul that David was come to Nob, and that the priest Achimelech had given him bread, and the sword of Goliath, and had inquired for him of the Lord. Then the king sent to call Achimelech, with all his priestly family; and they all came before the king. Saul said, Why have ye, thou and Jesse's son, conspired against me? Thou hast inquired of God for him, and given him food and weapons, that he should rise against me, and aim at my crown and my life, as it now clearly appeareth. And Achimelech replied, Who, among all thy servants, is as trustworthy as David, the king's son-in-law, obedient to thy word, and the most honoured at thy court? Is it from to-day that I have begun to inquire for him of the Lord? Be it far from me. Let not the king impute any thing unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father, for thy servant knew not the least of all this. But the king said, Thou shalt surely die, Achimelech, thou and all thy father's house. And he forthwith said to the guards that stood about him, Surround the priests, and slay them, for they, too, are of David's party. But the servants of the king refused to lay hand on the priests of the Lord. Then the king said to Doeg, Step thou forth, and slay the priests. And Doeg came forth, and slew the priests. And there fell on that day eighty-five persons. He also ordered the city of the priests, Nob, to be smitten with the edge of the sword; both men and women, children and sucklings, even oxen, and asses, and sheep became a prey to the sword.[1] Only Abiathar, a son of Achimelech, escaped, and fled to David. And when he had told him all that had happened, David said, I knew it that day, when Doeg was there, that he would betray it unto Saul. Alas, it is I who have occasioned the death of thy family! However, stay thou with me, and fear not; for he that seeketh thy life, seeketh mine: thou shalt be safe with me.

[1] Here we have another proof of the mischief which *one* man can cause, and of the destruction which one wicked action can produce. Had it not been for Doeg's calumniation and treason, these innocent men would certainly not have been murdered, nor Saul tainted with so much guilt. O, what a horrible vice is calumny! It is the associate of numerous other vices; a poisonous weed which suffers no sound plant to grow beside it. Let every man strive to guard his soul from so great an evil.

XV. OCCURRENCES AT EN-GEDI. THE DEATH OF SAMUEL.

DAVID'S GENEROUS AND NOBLE-MINDED CONDUCT TOWARDS SAUL.

JONATHAN, the son of Saul, arose and went to David (who was then staying in the wilderness of Ziph), and encouraged him in his confidence in God. He said to him, Fear not, my father's hand shall not reach thee; thou shalt one day be king over Israel, and I shall then be second to thee in rank; even my father knoweth that. At the same time, Saul was informed, that David was in the wilderness of En-Gedi. He forthwith took three thousand chosen men, and went to seek David and his men. And he came to the sheep-cotes by the way. There was a cave, and Saul went in to cover his feet. In the back of the cave were David and his men. And the men said unto him, Behold, this is the day in which the Lord, as it were, sayeth unto thee, Here I will deliver thine enemy into thy hands, do unto him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and secretly cut off the skirt of Saul's robe. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. But to his men he said, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto the anointed of the Lord; to stretch forth my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord. So David stayed his men by these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. Saul, meanwhile, had arisen, and proceeded on his way. David also went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. Saul looked behind him, and David stooped with his face to the earth, bowed himself, and said, Wherefore dost thou listen to the talk of those who say, David seeketh thy ruin? Behold, this day thou canst have ocular proofs how the Lord did deliver thee into my hand, but I have spared thee. Oh, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand! That I cut off this, and killed thee not, will surely convince thee that I meditate no evil, nor any thing that is criminal against thee. I have not sinned against thee, and yet thou attemptest to take my life. Let the Lord judge between me and thee. He will see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thy hand. When David had finished speaking, Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. And he continued and said, Verily, David, thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast shown me kindness, whereas I

have rewarded thee with evil. Thou hast indeed dealt well with me, even as thou thyself hast just said; forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me into thy hand, thou sparedst my life; for who that meeteth his enemy, would let him go his way in peace? Wherefore may the Lord reward thee good for what thou hast done unto me this day. Behold, I know well that thou shalt be king one day, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy hand. Swear now, therefore, unto me, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy the name of my house. And David sware unto Saul, whereupon the latter went home; but David and his men went up unto the hold. About the same time, Samuel died, and all the Israelites met, mourned for him, and lamented him, and buried him in his home at Ramah.

XVI. NABAL. HIS BASE AVARICE AND INGRATITUDE.

ABIGAIL. HER PRUDENCE, PIETY, AND AFFABILITY.

"The miser's instruments are evil; he deviseth wickedness, to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right." Isa. xxxii. 7.

THERE was a man in Maon named Nabal, whose possessions were in Carmel, where he was wont to stop when he was shearing his sheep. This man was very great; had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats. The name of his wife was Abigail; she was a woman of good understanding, and of beautiful countenance; but the man was churlish, and evil in his doings. When David heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep, he despatched ten servants, and said to them, Get ye up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, greet him in my name, and thus shall ye say to him, Prosperity to thee; peace be both to thee and to thy family, and to all that thou hast. I have heard that thou art shearing; now thy shepherds who were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young men themselves, and they will not deny it. Wherefore let thy servants find favour in thine eyes, since we come on such a joyful day; and give, we pray thee, to thy servants, and to thy son David, whatever thou canst spare (of thy meal). And David's servants went, and repeated to Nabal all those words in the name of David. But they had hardly ceased speaking, when Nabal answered and said, Who is David; and who is

the son of Jesse? There are many servants now-a-days, who run away from their master. What! shall I then take my food, my drink, my meat, that I have prepared for my shearers, and give it unto men, of whom I do not even know whence they come? Hereupon David's servants turned about, and went again, and came to David, and told him all those words. And David said unto his men, Gird on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword. And there went up after David about four hundred men, and two hundred remained behind by the baggage. But one of the young men informed Abigail, Nabal's wife, of this, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness, to salute our master, but he answered them harshly. And these men were very good unto us; they did us no harm, neither were we wanting in any thing as long as we had intercourse with them, when we were in the fields. Like a wall they protected us both by night and day, all the while we were keeping the sheep in their neighbourhood. Now, therefore, consider and see what thou hast to do; for misfortune threateneth our master and his house, and he is too base to be remonstrated with. Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, five measures of parched corn, a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs; all this she laid on asses, and said to her servants, Go on before me; behold, I will follow you. But she told her husband Nabal nothing of this matter. And as she rode on the ass down the side of the hill, she met David and his men. Now David had said to his men, I have then in vain guarded in the wilderness all that this man hath. He lost not the least thing, and now he requiteth me evil for good. May God punish David's enemies now and hereafter, if by the morning I leave alive ought of all that appertaineth to him! When Abigail saw David, she hasted and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, stretched herself on the ground, arose, and again fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, let the punishment fall; only permit thy servant to speak, and hear the words of thy handmaid. Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this base man; for as his name is *Nabal* (mean, ungrateful), so is he *ungrateful*, and ingratitude is with him. But I, thy handmaid, saw not the young men whom thou, my lord, didst send. Now, therefore, my lord, as thou livest, and the Lord liveth, the Lord

who hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, (oh, that like Nabal may be all thy enemies![1]) permit now, that this present, which thy servant hath brought unto thee, be given unto the young men that follow my lord. I pray thee, forgive thy servant's transgression. Behold, the Lord will certainly establish thee a permanent house. My lord fighteth the battle of the Lord (viz. a legitimate war), and therefore no misfortune shall befall thee. A man, indeed, is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy life; but thy life, my lord, shall be bound up closely with the bundle of the living who are with the Lord; but the life of thine enemies he shall cast away as out of the sheath of the sling. And it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath promised thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel, that this shall be no obstacle to thee, nor disturb the tranquillity of thy heart, to have shed innocent blood, and to have revenged thyself. And one day, when the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, thou shalt certainly remember thy handmaid. David replied to Abigail, saying, Blessed be thy understanding, and blessed be thou who hast prevented me this day from coming to shed blood, and from revenging msyelf with my own hand; for, as the Lord God of Israel liveth, who hath kept me back from hurting thee, hadst thou not hasted and come to meet me, surely nought of what belongeth to Nabal would have been left alive by to-morrow. So David accepted her presents, and said to her, See, I regard thy person, and hearken to thy voice.[2] Abigail then returned to Nabal. And, behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken, wherefore she, at the moment, told him nothing of the matter; but in the morning, when Nabal was become sober, his wife told him the whole occurrence; then his heart was benumbed within him, and he became as a stone. About ten days after, the Lord smote Nabal, and he died. When David heard this, he said, Blessed be the Lord, who hath avenged my reproach upon Nabal, but hath kept his ser-

[1] That is, may they be as void of power as he!

[2] My young readers of the female sex, will, I trust, not fail to take this beautiful model to heart, and endeavour to impress it on their memory, and keep it before their mind's eye for imitation; that they, too, may one day act in their sphere like the wise Abigail, and, by a prudent intervention and gentle intercession, where such are needed, create peace, and avert calamities.

vant from evil, and hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. David, soon after, sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife. She consented, came, accompanied by five maidens, to David, and became his wife.

XVII. MEETING OF DAVID AND SAUL AT HACHILAH.

ANOTHER INSTANCE OF DAVID'S NOBLE AND GENEROUS CONDUCT TOWARDS SAUL.

"When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Prov. xvi. 7.

SOME time after, Saul again went out against David, with three thousand men, after having been informed that David hid himself in the hill of Hachilah.[1] But when David heard that Saul pursued him, he retreated into the wilderness. It was night. Saul lay asleep; his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster, and his general Abner and the people lay in a circle round about him, and were asleep. As David now knew the place where Saul lay, he said to his men, Who will go down with me to the camp of Saul? Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, said, I will go down with thee; so David and Abishai went by night amongst the people of Saul. And Abishai said, This day the Lord hath delivered thine enemy into thy hand, let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear to the earth *at once*. But David said to Abishai, Hurt him not, for who hath ever stretched forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and hath escaped with impunity? The Lord forbid, continued he, that I should lay hands upon the anointed of the Lord. But, I pray thee, take the spear that is at his head, and the cruse of water, and let us go. When David had permitted this to be done, they went away; no one perceived them, no one awoke. And when David had ascended the opposite hill, he cried to the people and to Abner, saying, Answerest thou not Abner? He replied, Who art thou that thus criest to the king? And David said, Verily, thou art a valiant man, and who is like to thee in Israel? But wherefore dost thou not guard thy lord, lest any one of the people come to deprive thy lord and king of his life? The thing is not good that thou hast done. As

[1] This relapse of Saul into a fresh persecution, clearly shows how deeply hatred and envy were rooted in his mind. The favourable impression which the occurrence at En-Gedi had made on his mind, was already obliterated.

the Lord liveth, ye have all forfeited your lives, because ye have not watched over your master, the anointed of the Lord. Now look about you, and see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his head. And Saul recognised David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And David said, It is my voice, my lord and king. And David continued, and said, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? What have I committed, or of what crime am I guilty? I pray thee, my lord and king, hear but the words of thy servant, If the Lord have incited thee against me, let an offering appease him; but if men have done it, oh, then, they must certainly be accursed before God, since they have expelled me from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, as if saying, "Go, serve other gods." Now, let not my blood be shed before the face of the Lord. Truly, the king of Israel is come out to seek a mere insect, and pursueth me as one hunteth a partridge in the mountains. Then said Saul, I have done wrong; return, my son David, I will no more do thee harm, because my life was so precious in thine eyes this day. Behold, I have acted foolishly, and have erred exceedingly. David replied, Here is the king's spear, let one of the servants come over and fetch it. The Lord shall render to every man according to his righteousness and his faithfulness. And as I this day valued thy life, so may the Lord value mine, and deliver me out of all tribulation. Then Saul said to David, Blessed be thou, my son David, thou shalt effect and accomplish it. Hereupon David went on his way, and Saul, too, returned to his place.

XVIII. SAUL GOES TO A WITCH. HIS DEATH, AND THAT OF HIS SON.

HUMANE ACT OF THE INHABITANTS OF JABESH.

And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for a warfare against Israel. And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart became alarmed. He inquired of the Lord, but obtained no answer, neither by dreams, nor by Urim,[1] nor by prophets. Then Saul ordered his servants to conduct him to a woman at

[1] Divine oracles, by which the Lord answered through the medium of the priests.

Endor, who could conjure up spirits; and they arrived there at night-time. And when the woman asked him whom she should conjure up, he answered, Bring me up Samuel. And when she had caused Samuel to appear, Saul said, The Philistines gather themselves together against me; I am sore distressed; God answereth me no more; therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest indicate to me what I shall do. Then Samuel told him, that the Lord would deliver Israel into the hands of the Philistines, and that he and his three sons should perish at the same time.[1] When Saul heard this, he sank to the ground, a great fear having taken possession of him; and there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night. The woman brought some food, but he refused to eat. At length, at the urgings of his servants, and of the woman, he arose from the earth, and did eat with his servants. Then they rose up, and went away that night. The Philistines made war upon Israel; Israel was driven to flight, and left many slain in Mount Gilboa. The Philistines closely pursued Saul and his three sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, overtook, and slew them. And the archers pressed so hard upon Saul, that they had almost overtaken him, and he was in great alarm. Then he said to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword and slay me, lest these idolaters come and pierce me, and abuse me. But the armour-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid to do so.[2] Then Saul took his sword, and fell upon it. When his armour-bearer saw this, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. The following morning, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons fallen in Mount Gilboa.

[1] Impositions of this kind were practised and resorted to in those superstitious times, and, indeed, even till recently. Saul had, on his accession to government, banished all conjurors and magicians from his country; and yet, the distracted state of his mind, impels him to go to this woman, and to consult her delusive art: so far can man go astray, when he has once departed from the path of virtue. What this cunning impostor was to put into the mouth of the supposed Samuel, she would, judging from the circumstances of the times, and the unfortunate position of Saul, easily guess; especially as Saul was probably universally disliked by the people, for his unjust proceeding against David, and his cruelty to Nob, the city of priests, and as no doubt could be entertained that he would meet with deserved retribution from the Almighty.

[2] The faithful armour-bearer, from reverence for his royal master, could not be prevailed on to execute the dread command; but he had resolution and courage enough to deprive himself of life, and to follow his master in death. Rare attachment!

And they cut off his head, stripped off his armour, and sent it into the land of the Philistines round about, to spread the intelligence in the temples of their idols, and among the people. And they hung up his armour in one of the temples, and fastened his corpse and the corpses of his sons to the wall of Beth-Shan. When the inhabitants of Jabesh heard of what the Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant men among them arose, and travelled all night. And they took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, from the wall of Beth-Shan, carried them to Jabesh, and burnt them there. Then they collected the bones, buried them in the forest near Jabesh, and fasted seven days.[1]

XIX. DAVID LAMENTS AND MOURNS FOR SAUL AND JONATHAN. HE IS ANOINTED AT HEBRON AS KING OVER JUDAH. ISH-BOSHETH, A SON OF SAUL, IS MADE KING.

Now it came to pass, after the death of Saul, that David was at Ziklag, where he had already abode two days. He had returned thither from the slaughter of the Amalekites; for the Amalekites had taken Ziklag, set fire to it, and, with the spoil, carried away captive his two wives, Achinoam and Abigail. But David, in his turn, defeated them, and brought back all the spoil, and all the prisoners, as well as his two wives. And when, on the third day, he received the intelligence of the death of Saul and Jonathan, he rent his garments, as did also all who surrounded him. And they mourned and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel, who had fallen by the sword. And David sang the following elegy over Saul and Jonathan.

Oh, beauty of Israel!
Upon thine own high places thou wast slain.
How are the mighty fallen:
Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Askelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the heathens triumph.

[1] Who could remain unmoved by this affectionate and faithful act of the inhabitants of Jabesh, who thus evinced their loyalty to their unfortunate king, even after his death.

Ye mountains of Gilboa,
May no dew nor rain be upon you,
Nor fields of offerings;
For there the shield of the mighty hath been degraded,
The shield of Saul, that was not dipped in oil.[1]
From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty;
The bow of Jonathan, shrank not back,
The sword of Saul, returned not empty.
Saul and Jonathan,
Lovely and pleasant in their lives,
They were not divided even in death;
They, who were swifter than eagles,
Stronger than lions.
Weep, ye daughters of Israel;
Weep ye over Saul;
Who clothed you in scarlet, with beautiful finery,
And who adorned your dress with golden ornaments.
How are the mighty fallen in battle!
O Jonathan, slain upon thine own high places!
I am grieved for thee, Jonathan, my brother!
How pleasant wast thou unto me!
With a wonderful love thou wast attached to me,
With more than woman's love.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!

After this, David went up with his wives and his men to Hebron. And there came men from Judah, and anointed David king over the house of Judah. When he was told that the inhabitants of Jabesh had interred Saul, he sent messengers unto them, saying, Blessed be ye of the Lord, for the kindness which ye have shown to your lord, to Saul, in having buried him. May the Lord in return show you kindness and truth! And I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing; only continue, even after the death of Saul, to be such valiant men. Know ye, also, that the house of Judah hath anointed me king over them. But Abner, the captain of Saul's host, had taken Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul,

[1] In ancient times, some warriors used to moisten their shields with oil, that the arrows and spears might glide off. A shield not oiled is therefore a proof of valour.

to Machnaim, and there made him king over Benjamin, and over the rest of Israel. The house of Judah, however, adhered to David.

XX. ABNER AND ISH-BOSHETH ARE SLAIN. DAVID'S DISPLEASURE AT IT, AND PUNISHMENT OF THE MURDERERS OF THE LATTER. THE WHOLE NATION DOES HOMAGE TO DAVID.

ABNER, and the army of Ish-bosheth, meanwhile, made war upon the men of David, so that a fierce battle ensued, in which the men of David were victorious. Abner, hereupon, sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, I will make a league with thee, and bring about all Israel unto thee. And David replied, Well, I will make a league with thee, but on this condition, that thou bring back to me my wife Michal, the daughter of Saul. David also sent messengers to Ish-bosheth on that business, and he sent him Michal back. Abner then came to David, to Hebron, with twenty men; and David made them a feast. And Abner said unto David, I will arise, and go to gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may enter into a covenant with thee, and that thou mayest reign according to thy pleasure. So David dismissed Abner, and he went thence in peace; but Joab, David's general, who was meanwhile returned from the pursuit of an enemy, sent messengers after Abner, to bring him back again. And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate, and stabbed him (to revenge the death of his brother Asael, whom Abner had slain in a combat), and he died. When David heard this, he said, I am innocent, and my throne is innocent before the Lord, of the blood of Abner. And he execrated Joab on account of that deed; but for Abner, he ordered a general lamentation, and he himself followed the bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron. The king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept with him. And David lamented over Abner, and said,

> Did Abner die the death of a coward?
> No: thy hands were not bound,
> Nor thy feet put into fetters;
> But as a man falleth before the wicked,
> So didst thou fall.

And all the people readily acknowledged, that it was not of the king to slay Abner.

Ish-bosheth was attended by two chiefs, Rechab and Baanah. One day, it being very hot, and Ish-bosheth indulging in an afternoon sleep, they entered the house, and slew him in his bed; they then took his head, and brought it unto David, to Hebron. And they said to the king, Behold, here is the head of Ish-bosheth, the son of thine enemy Saul, who sought thy life; the Lord hath now avenged my lord the king of Saul, and of his seed. But David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, and said, As the Lord liveth, who hath delivered my soul out of all distress, if I have ordered him to be slain, who brought me the tidings of Saul's death, and who considered himself merely as a messenger, how much more do ye wicked men deserve death, who have assassinated an innocent person upon his bed? And should I not require his blood at your hands? Should I not extirpate you from the earth? And he forthwith commanded his young men to slay them. They did so, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron; but the head of Ish-bosheth he ordered to be interred in the grave of Abner at Hebron.

Then came all the elders of Israel unto David in Hebron; he there entered into a covenant with them before the Lord, and they anointed him king over Israel. He was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years, namely, seven years at Hebron over Judah, and thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

XXI. DAVID PAYS HOMAGE TO GOD ON THE ENTRY OF THE ARK OF THE COVENANT. THE PROPHET NATHAN'S DIVINE MESSAGE TO HIM.

"Serve ye the Lord with gladness; come before him with rejoicing." Psalm c. 2.

After these events, David gathered together select men from Israel, to bring up the ark of the covenant, which was standing at Gibeah, in the house of Abinadab, to his city. And they brought the ark of the covenant out of the house of Abinadab; and David, and the men of Israel who were with him, played before the Lord on harps, on psalteries, on timbrels, on cornets, and on cymbals. The ark was, however, not removed to the city of David, but was carried into the house of Obed-Edom.

After having been there for three months, the king had it brought to the city of David. And whenever the bearers of the ark had gone six paces, he ordered oxen and fatlings to be sacrificed. David himself danced before the Lord with all his might, and wore a linen ephod (outer garment).[1] So David and all Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. And Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through the window; and as she saw David dancing and leaping before the ark of the Lord, she blamed him in her heart. The ark of the Lord was brought to its destined place, namely, under the tent, which David had pitched for it. Then David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the Lord. And when he had made an end of them, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord. And he dealt among the whole multitude of Israel that was assembled, to each, to the women as well as to the men, a cake, a piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine; whereupon the people departed, every one to his house. When David returned to bless his household, Michal came out to meet him, and said, How dignified was the king of Israel to-day, having shown himself in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vile would expose himself! But David replied to Michal, saying, It was before the Lord, who chose me instead of thy father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord; it was before him that I expressed my joy; and if I had humbled myself still more, and thought myself ever so insignificant, I should yet be honoured by the maid-servants, of whom thou hast spoken.[2] And Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no children unto the day of her death.

And it came to pass, when the king sat peaceably in his house, the Lord having given him rest from all his enemies round about; that he, one day, said to the prophet Nathan, See, now, I dwell in a palace of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth under curtains. The prophet replied, Go, do all that thy heart desireth, for the Lord is with thee. But that night, the word

[1] This he wore as a priestly robe, in honour of the solemnity. And in the exalted sentiment of holy joy, which animated his breast, the pious king, on this occasion, chaunted the twenty-fourth Psalm, which is now recited when the Roll of the Law is replaced in the ark.

[2] Michal's vain and proud expression, which, at the same time contained a slight against the religious ceremonies observed on the occasion, had well deserved so severe a rebuke. Before God there is neither human dominion, nor rank, nor dignity, but only humility, adoration, and reverential love.

of the Lord came unto Nathan, as follows: Go, and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build a house to my name, but thy son, whom I will place on the throne after thee, he shall build a temple, in honour of my name. And I will be as his father, and he shall be as my son. When David heard this, he thanked the Lord from all his heart, prayed in profound veneration, and said, O Lord, O God, who art the only God, and whose words shall come to pass, as thou hast promised all these good things unto thy servant, may it be thy pleasure, so to bless the house of thy servant, that it may ever be established before thee; for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it, and only by thy blessing the house of thy servant shall be blessed for ever.

XXII. DAVID'S REIGN. MEPHIBOSHETH, A SON OF JONATHAN, COMES TO DAVID.

NOBLE SELF-DENIAL, BENEFICENCE, AND GRATITUDE.

THE Lord assisted David in all his undertakings. And David reigned over all Israel, and practised justice and righteousness towards every one of his people. The principal heroes and generals of David were Joab, Abishai, and Benajah; Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was recorder; Zadok, the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar, were the priests, and Seraiah was the scribe. One day, while they were engaged in war against the Philistines (David being in the strong-hold, and the vanguard of the Philistines in Beth-lehem), David had a fancy, and said, Who will bring me water to drink out of the cistern at Beth-lehem, which is there in the gate? Then three of the heroes broke into the camp of the Philistines, drew water out of the cistern in the gate, and brought it to David. But he now refused to drink it, and poured it out in honour of the Lord, saying, God forbid that I should do this thing. What! Should I drink the blood (as it were) of these men who went thither at the hazard of their lives? So he would not drink. One day he said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul? I should like to show him kindness for the sake of Jonathan. Upon this, they called Ziba, a servant of the house of Saul, before the king. And he told him, that there was yet left a son of Jonathan, of the name of Mephibosheth; and the king sent and had him brought before him. Mephibosheth

came unto David, and prostrated himself before him to the ground. David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant. And David said, Fear not, I will show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake; I will restore unto thee all the estates of Saul thy grandfather, and thou shalt eat at my table continually. Then the king sent for Ziba, and said to him, All that pertained to Saul, and to his house, I have given to the son of thy master. Thou shalt therefore till the land for him, thou, and thy sons, and thy servants (he had fifteen sons, and twenty servants), and deliver up the produce, that thy master's son may subsist upon it; but as for Mephibosheth himself, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons. Ziba replied, As my lord and king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. Mephibosheth thenceforth continued to dwell in Jerusalem, and the whole household of Ziba had to wait on him.

XXIII. DAVID COMMITS SIN. THE PUNISHMENT WHICH THE PROPHET NATHAN ANNOUNCES TO HIM. REPENTANCE AND SUBMISSION TO THE WILL OF GOD.

"Tarry not to return unto the Lord, and defer it not from day to day, for suddenly cometh the wrath of the Lord, and in the day of vengeance thou shalt perish." Sirach v. 7.

But David committed a sin, by causing Uriah to be slain in battle,—Joab, his general, in his unscrupulous officiousness, having obeyed his behest,—and by subsequently taking Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, to himself to wife. This deed was exceedingly displeasing in the eyes of the Lord. And the Lord sent the prophet Nathan unto David. He went to him, and said, There were two men in one city, the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe-lamb, which he had bought and brought up, and which had grown up with him and with his children. It did eat of his bread, drank of his cup, slept in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. One day, a stranger came unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock or herd, to set before his guest, and took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. Then David broke out in violent anger at the man, and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die. And the lamb he shall restore

fourfold, because he did this thing, and had no pity. And Nathan said to David, *Thou art the man!* Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and delivered thee out of the hand of Saul. I thus gave thee thy master's house, I gave thee thy master's wives, and gave thee the house of Israel and Judah; and if that were too little, I could give thee still more and more; wherefore, then, hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, and done evil in his sight? Thou hast caused Uriah to perish by the sword of the children of Ammon, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife. Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah to be thy wife. And out of thine own house will I cause calamity to come forth upon thee; thy wives shall be taken from thee, and be given to another. Thou didst it secretly, but I will do it openly, before all Israel, and before the light of the sun: thus saith the Lord. David said to Nathan, I have indeed sinned against the Lord.[1] And Nathan again said to David, The Lord, indeed, remitteth thy punishment in so far, that thou shalt not die; howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, besides the threatened punishment, the child also that is born unto thee shall die. Hereupon Nathan departed unto his house. And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.

David, therefore, besought God for the recovery of the child, and he fasted and lay all night upon the earth. The elders of his house endeavoured to prevail on him to rise from the ground; but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. On the seventh day the child died. David's servants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead; for they said amongst themselves, while the child was yet alive, he would not hearken unto us, how shall we then inform him of the death of the child? He might even do himself a hurt. But David perceived that his servants whispered something to each other, and he thence

[1] The public transgression of a high dignitary, of a man having the reputation of piety, of a king, has a much more injurious effect on public morality, than the offence of a man in the humbler ranks of life, whose conduct and example, though not without their bad influence, yet excite much less attention, and are less open to imitation. And so it is in domestic life: the faults and the misconduct of the master or mistress of the house, have a far more dangerous effect on the members of the household, and far more incite them to imitation, than a similar fault committed by another member.

concluded that the child was dead. He therefore asked and said, Is the child dead? And they answered, Yes, it is dead. And David immediately arose from the ground, and washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, went into the house of the Lord, and worshipped; he then returned to his own house, asked for food, they set it before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What meaneth it that thou doest thus; while the child was yet alive, thou didst fast and weep, and as soon as it was dead, thou didst rise and eat? David answered them, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast; can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will never return unto me. David then consoled his wife. And she bare him a son, whose name was called Solomon. And the Lord loved him.

XXIV. OCCURRENCES BETWEEN ABSALOM AND AMNON, THE SONS OF DAVID. THE WISE WOMAN OF TEKOAH.

"Beautiful as golden apples, in a basket of silver wire, is a word fitly spoken." Prov. xxv. 11.

After some time, it happened that Amnon greatly offended Tamar, who was Absalom's sister;[1] this caused the king great vexation: but Absalom conceived a deep hatred against Amnon on account of his sister. And when two years afterwards Absalom had sheep-shearing, he invited all the royal princes to his house. They came to Absalom, and Amnon was among them. But Absalom had commanded his men (at a given signal) to slay Amnon during the repast. And the men did so, and slew Amnon. Then all the king's sons quickly mounted their mules and escaped. When they came home to the king, they loudly wept for what had happened, and the king and all his servants wept likewise. But Absalom fled to Talmai, king of Geshur, where he remained three years. And David mourned for his son all that time.

Now Joab perceived that the king's heart was against Absalom. He therefore sent for a wise woman from Tekoah,

[1] Absalom and Tamar were the offspring of *one* mother, but Amnon was the son of another woman.

and instructed her how to speak with the king about Absalom. And he said to her, Put on mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself, that thou appear as a woman that had a long time mourned for a departed friend; then go to the king, and speak unto him. And Joab put the words in her mouth. The woman of Tekoah went to the king, fell before him on her face to the ground, and said, Help, O king! The king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she replied, I, alas, am a widow; my husband is dead. And thy maid had two sons, and they contended together in the field; there was none to part them; so the one smote the other, and slew him. Now the whole family is risen against thy servant, saying, Deliver up to us him that slew his brother, that we may kill him for the life of his brother, whom he slew, that he, the heir, be also destroyed. Thus they wish to quench this one spark that is left to me, so as not to leave my husband either name or remainder upon the earth. The king then said to the woman, Go home, and I will dispose of this matter. And she continued and said, But, my lord and king, the guilt would then be upon me and upon my father's house, and the king and his throne would be acquitted. The king said, Whosoever saith ought unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall certainly not annoy thee any more. Then said she, Remember, O king, the Lord thy God, and suffer not the avengers of blood to heighten the calamity, suffer them not to destroy my son. And he said, As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth. Then the woman said, Let thy servant, I pray thee, speak one more word to my lord the king. And he said, Say on. And the woman said, Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God? But, according as the king hath spoken in this thing, is it not a fault in him that the king doth not fetch home again his banished? For we all must needs die, and then are as water, which is spilt on the ground, and cannot be gathered up again. God doth not require our lives, but he deviseth means, that he who hath gone astray, be not altogether expelled from his presence (by showing him the way to repentance and amelioration). Now, therefore, thy servant thought the sentence which thou hast spoken concerning my son, would be a comfort to my lord the king; for my lord and king is as an angel of God, to discern good and bad. May the Lord thy God be further with thee. Then the king answered and said to the woman, Pray, conceal not from me

what I shall ask thee. The woman said, Let my lord the king but please to ask. And the king said, Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this? The woman answered and said, As thy soul liveth, my lord the king, thy servant Joab hath put all these words in the mouth of thy servant, to give the matter a better turn; but, indeed, my lord is as wise as an angel of the Lord, he knoweth all that happeneth in the land. And the king said unto Joab, Since thou hast so arranged it, go and bring Absalom again. And Joab bowed himself, fell to the ground on his face, thanked the king, and said, Now thy servant is convinced that I have found favour in thy sight, in that thou, my lord and king, hast granted the request of thy servant. So Joab arose, and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. And Absalom was there two years, but saw not the king's face. After that period he appeared before the king, prostrated himself before him to the ground, and the king kissed him.

XXV. ABSALOM'S CONSPIRACY. DAVID'S FLIGHT, AND HIS CALM SUBMISSION TO THE DISPENSATION OF THE ALMIGHTY.

"He who despiseth his father, blasphemeth God. Such conceit hath already deceived many, and their temerity hath caused them to fall." Sirach iii. 18, 28.

ABSALOM was of nobler appearance than any other man in Israel: he also rode in a magnificent chariot, and had fifty men rur before him. He sought acquaintance with the people who came to the city, showed himself kind to them, and sometimes was heard to say, If I were judge in the land, I would certainly deal out more justice. And when any one approached to do him obeisance, he extended his arm towards him, embraced, and kissed him. In this manner he gained many hearts in Israel. One day, having obtained his father's permission, he went to Hebron, in order, as he pretended, to perform a vow to the Lord, and two hundred men went with him. Here he was joined by numerous adherents, and a strong confederacy was formed. When the king heard of this, he said to his servants, Let us hasten and flee before Absalom, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and desolate the city with the edge of the sword. So the king departed with his servants, and several officers of the state, and six hundred men, who had followed him from Gath, went with him. And the people in the country round about, wept with a loud voice, when they

saw the king thus flee before Absalom. But the priests, Zadok and Abiathar, together with all the Levites, were with him, bearing the ark of God. And the king said unto them, Carry back the ark of God into the city. If I shall find favour in the sight of God, he will bring me back, and permit me again to see it and its habitation; but should he pronounce this sentence upon me, "I have no delight in thee," behold I am also ready for it; let him do unto me as seemeth good unto him; see, I will tarry in the wilderness, until you send me word from the city. Zadok, therefore, and Abiathar, carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem, and remained there; but David went up the olive mount, barefooted, his head covered, and weeping; and all the people that were with him, covered every man his head, and they went up weeping. Here David was told, that Ahitophel (one of David's privy councillors) was amongst the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, frustrate the counsels of Ahitophel. And when he had arrived at the summit of the mount, where it was customary to worship God, Hushai, the Archite, came to meet him, with his coat rent, and ashes upon his head. But David said to him, If thou wert to travel with me, thou wouldst be but an encumbrance to me; but if thou wouldst return to the city, and feign subjection to Absalom, and devotion to his interests, thou mayest perhaps succeed in defeating the counsel of Ahitophel. The priests Zadok and Abiathar, and their sons, will assist thee there. So Hushai, David's friend, returned to the city, and arrived there just at the moment of Absalom's entering Jerusalem.

When David was a little past the summit of the hill, Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth (Jonathan's son), met him, with a couple of asses, laden with bread, wine, and fruit. And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? Ziba replied, The asses are for the royal family to ride on, and the provisions for refreshment in the desert. The king asked, And where is thy master's son, Mephibosheth? Ziba replied, He is in Jerusalem; for he said, Now the house of Israel will restore to me the kingdom of my father.[1] Then said the king

[1] The sly servant, besides uttering a falsehood and a calumny, here committed (as we shall hereafter see) a very base action. Such are the evil consequences of covetousness. He endeavoured to ingratiate himself with David, in order to be rewarded; and in pursuing this object, he did not consider that things might turn out differently.

to Ziba, All that Mephibosheth possesseth shall belong to thee (when I shall again have acquired dominion). Ziba replied, I am thy humble servant; let me further find grace in thy sight, my lord and king.

And when David came towards Bachurim, behold there came out of it a man of the family of Saul, whose name was Shimei, and he cursed David, and cast stones at him. Then said Abishai, the brother of Joab, unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king; let me go over, I pray thee, and strike off his head? And the king replied, What troubleth it you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Let him curse; perhaps the Lord will have it so (to completely humble me), and who shall then rebuke him, and say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And he continued and said, Behold, my own son seeketh my life; how much more now may this Benjamite (being related to Saul) do it? Let him alone; assuredly the Lord hath bidden him to curse. It may be that the Lord will ultimately look on mine affliction, and requite me good for his cursing this day.[1] At length, the king and his followers arrived at Bachurim; they were fatigued, and refreshed themselves there.

XXVI. THE COUNSEL OF AHITOPHEL, TO SURPRISE DAVID, IS FRUSTRATED THROUGH HUSHAI. ABSALOM'S DEFEAT AND DEATH. DAVID'S RETURN, AND THE INCIDENTS CONNECTED THEREWITH.

PATERNAL TENDERNESS. GENEROSITY AND NOBLE MINDEDNESS. PHILANTHROPY. GRATITUDE.

Absalom had meanwhile entered Jerusalem, together with all his adherents, and had himself proclaimed king. And Hushai, David's friend, came to Absalom, and said, God save the king; as I have served thy father, so will I serve thee. Ahitophel said to Absalom, Let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will pursue David this night. But Hushai advised, that all

[1] Man should bear the misfortunes of life with humility and patience, and, like the pious king, in the event of any calamity, think "what God doth is done for our good. Nor should man be pusillanimous and desponding in adversity; but, fully confiding in the goodness and mercy of the universal Father, he should hope for His salvation, and await a better time. Religion, as is shown us in the instance of David, affords not only patience under sufferings, but it also furnishes mitigatory solace; nay, it renders us happy even in adversity.

Israel should be summoned, and that Absalom should go to battle in person, and they would thus totally defeat David. And the counsel of Hushai seemed better, in the eyes of Absalom and all his people, than that of Ahitophel; for the Lord had so disposed it, to frustrate the advantageous counsel of Ahitophel, in order that the deserved punishment might fall upon Absalom.[1] Hushai now sent word to David, through the priests Zadok and Abiathar (who deputed their sons). And Jonathan and Ahimaaz were departed to convey the report to David; and as they were staying by En-rogel, a maid went and told them they should leave the place; for they might not be seen to come into the city, since a lad had seen them, and told Absalom. They therefore went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in Bachurim. This man had a well in his court, whither they went to conceal themselves. And the housewife spread a covering over the well's mouth, and scattered grits thereon, so that nothing was known. And when Absalom's servants came to look for them, the woman said to them, They are gone over the brook of water. When the servants were departed, both of them came up out of the well, and went and reported the matter to king David. Then David, and all his men, broke up, and passed over Jordan, toward Machnaim; but Ahitophel, seeing that his counsel was defeated, mounted his ass, returned home to his city, put his household in order, and strangled himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father. And when David was come to Machnaim, Shobi, Machir, and Barzillai the Gileadite, brought him bedding, earthen vessels, and all kinds of fruit; also honey, butter, and cheese; for they thought the people might have become weary and hungry in the desert.

Absalom had, meanwhile, passed over Jordan, and all his

[1] From heaven the Lord looketh down;
He beholdeth all the sons of men.
From the place of his habitation,
He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth:
He who fashioneth all their hearts;
He knoweth all their actions. Psalm xxxiii.

Here, too, as in many other instances in sacred history, it is again shown us, how God, by means of his omniscience and justice, directs all the actions of men, in order to requite to every one according to his works. With this idea, let us consider the adventures of David, Absalom, Amnon, Ahitophel, and many others. See above, page 182.

adherents with him, and he encamped in the neighbourhood of Gilead. David numbered his men, and sent them out in three divisions. And when the king was about to go forth with them himself, the people said to him, It would be better that thou succour us out of the city. The king said, What seemeth you best, I will do. He then placed himself by the gate-side, and the people marched out by hundreds and by thousands. And the king commanded the generals, Joab, Abishai, and Itai, saying, Deal ye gently, for my sake, with the lad Absalom. And all the people heard it, when the king enjoined this on his generals. The people advanced, and the battle was fought in the wood of Ephraim. And the people of Israel were slain before the men of David, and there fell of them twenty thousand men. Absalom himself met the servants of David; he was riding upon a mule, and the mule got under the bough of a great linden-tree, and his hair being very long, it caught hold of the branches of the tree, and the mule ran away from under him. When a certain man saw this, he told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in a linden-tree. And Joab hastened to the spot, took three darts, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, and then ordered his armour-bearers to give him the final stroke. Hereupon he had the cornet blown, and the people returned, and ceased to pursue Israel. And they took Absalom, and cast him into a cave, and erected a great heap of stones over him. And all Israel had fled, every one to his tent. But when the king heard the news of Absalom's death, the king was greatly excited, and wept, exclaiming, O my son Absalom, O my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O my son, my son! At the same time the king covered his face. Thus the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people; and they got them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away, after having been obliged to flee in battle.

The king now betook himself on his way back. And when he had passed over Jordan, many of Judah and Benjamin came to meet him. Among them was Shimei, of Bachurim; he fell down before the king, and entreated his pardon. But Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, answered and said, What! shall this man not be put to death for having cursed the Lord's anointed? David, however, rebuked Abishai, for this, and said, There shall not any man this day be put to death; should I

not be thankful that I am this day again king over Israel? Therefore, the king said unto Shimei, Thou shalt not die; and he swore unto him to this effect. Mephibosheth, too, came to meet the king. He had kept deep mourning, from the day the king was obliged to flee, until the day he returned. The king asked him, Wherefore didst thou not go with me, Mephibosheth? And he answered, O my lord and king, my servant deceived me; for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go with the king, because thy servant is lame. But he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king, but my lord the king is as an angel of God. Do, therefore, what is good in thine eyes; for all of my father's house were deadly enemies to my lord and king, yet didst thou place thy servant at thy table; what right then have I yet to complain of thee? The king said, Why speakest thou any more of this matter? I have said it;[1] thou and Ziba shall divide the field. And Mephibosheth replied, Yea, let him take all, now that my lord is come again in peace unto his own house. And Barzillai was come, to accompany the king over Jordan. He had entertained the king while he stayed at Machnaim, for Barzillai was a very great man. The king said to him, Come thou over with me, and I will entertain thee at my house in Jerusalem. But Barzillai answered the king, and said, I am now eighty years old, and can I discern between good and evil; wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Let thy servant, I pray thee, return, that I may die in mine own city, by the grave of my father and of my mother. But, behold, thy servant Chimham, my son, let him go over with my lord and king, and do to him what shall seem good unto thee. The king answered, Chimham then shall go over with me, and I will do to him what shall seem good in thine eyes; and whatever else thou shalt require of me, I will do for thee. The king then kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned to his own place. And the king went on with the people to Jerusalem, and arrived there at his own house.

[1] Viz. I would give to Ziba the possessions of Mephibosheth (see above, page 182). Lest, therefore, I should break my word, thou must share with him.

XXVII. REBELLION OF SHEBA, AND HIS INGLORIOUS END. A WISE WOMAN SAVES THE CITY. THE NUMBERING OF THE PEOPLE. REPENTANCE. PLAGUE. ALTAR OF ATONEMENT IN THE THRESHING-FLOOR OF JEBUSI.

About that time, Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite, rebelled against David. He had the trumpet blown, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the sons of Jesse: Israel, let every man go to his tent. So all the men of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba; but the men of Judah clave unto their king, unto David. Joab, the general of David, marched out with many men of valour against Sheba, pursued after him, and besieged him in the city of Abel. They entrenched the city, and made preparation to batter the wall, and throw it down. Then cried a wise woman unto Joab, down from the wall, and said, A peace-loving, faithful city of Israel, crieth unto thee, saying, "Wouldst thou destroy a mother-city in Israel; why wilt thou ruin the property of the Lord?" And Joab replied, Far be it from me. I will not do so; only deliver up Sheba, who hath rebelled against the king, and I will depart from the city. Then the woman contrived, by her wisdom, that Sheba was slain, and his head cast out to Joab. The latter, therefore, ordered the cornet to be sounded, they retired from the city, every one to his home, and Joab returned to Jerusalem, unto the king.

And it came to pass, after the Lord had procured David peace from all his enemies round about, that a calamity arose for Israel,[1] in that David was seduced to number the people of Israel. Having commanded Joab, and said, Go, and number Israel and Judah, Joab replied, May the Lord thy God increase the people, as it now is, hundredfold, in the eyes of my lord. Why should my lord the king demand this thing

[1] Compare 1 Chron. chap. 21. Wantonness, which ever leads to follies, was, in this instance too, the instigator. The consciousness of possessing a great power, and a numerous people, induces vanity, and is opposed to humility and true piety. It is in this sense that the Talmud says, "There is no blessing in what is numbered." If, therefore, the numbering of the people is undertaken in a spirit of vanity, and for mere display of strength, it is displeasing to the Lord. Hence Joab remonstrated with David.

(the numbering)? Notwithstanding the king's command was urgent, so Joab departed with several captains. They traversed the country, and took the number of the people. And when Joab gave up the sum of the numbered people unto the king, there were in all Israel eight hundred thousand, and in Judah alone, five hundred thousand valiant men. But David felt remorse, after having numbered the people, and he prayed to the Lord, and said, I have sinned greatly in what I have done; pardon, O Lord, the iniquity of thy servant, for I have acted very foolishly. The next morning, the word of the Lord came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, as follows: Go, and say unto David, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things, choose thee one of them, and I will do it unto thee. Gad then came to David, delivered his message, and said, Shall seven years of famine come upon thy land, or wilt thou flee before thine enemies while they pursue thee, or shall there be three days pestilence in thy land? And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait; *let us, however, fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great, and only let me not fall into the hand of man.* And the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel, and there died of the people seventy thousand men. And when the angel stretched out his hand over Jerusalem also, to destroy therein, the Lord said to the angel, who raged among the people, It is enough; withdraw now thy hand: the angel of the Lord was then by the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite.[1] And David spoke unto the Lord, when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and committed an iniquity; but these sheep, what have they done? Let thy hand, I pray thee, be only against me, and against my father's house. And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, and erect an altar in honour of the Lord, in the threshing-floor of Araunah. And David went up, according to the command of the Lord, through Gad. When Araunah saw the king, he went out, and bowed himself before him to the ground, and said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? David replied, To purchase this threshing-floor of thee, to erect thereon an altar in honour of the Lord. And Araunah replied, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him; behold, here are oxen for offerings, and threshing instruments and harness for cattle for wood.

[1] A prince of Jebusi, who still dwelled there, as the proprietor of an estate, though David had already taken the citadel of Jebus (Zion).

All these things did Araunah, as king, give unto the king, saying, at the same time, May the Lord thy God be gracious unto thee. But the king said to him, Nay, but I will surely buy it of thee for its value, and not offer to my God offerings which cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And he there built an altar, in honour of the Lord, and offered burnt and peace-offerings. So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from among Israel.

THE BOOK OF KINGS.

סֵפֶר מְלָכִים

I. LAST ADDRESS OF DAVID TO HIS SON SOLOMON. DAVID'S DEATH. SOLOMON'S ACCESSION TO GOVERNMENT.

"The root of wisdom is eternal felicity, and her branches are long life; happy the man who is occupied with her, she is more valuable to him than all treasures." Ben Sirach, i. 20, 21 (according to the Syrian text).

Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die, and he charged his son Solomon, saying, I go the way of all the earth; be thou of good courage, therefore, and show thyself a man. Know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him with all thy heart, and with a willing mind: if thou seek him, thou shalt find him; but if thou forsake him, he shall forsake thee too. Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, walk in his ways, observe his statutes, his commandments, his precepts, and ordinances, according as they are written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou undertakest, and whithersoever thou turnest. And that the Lord may accomplish what he hath promised concerning me, namely, If thy offspring heed their path, and walk before me in truth, with all their heart, and with all their soul, there shall never fail

thee a successor on the throne of Israel. David departed this life to be with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David (his residence). He had reigned in all forty years over Israel; seven years he reigned in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. Adonijah, the son of Haggith, and the senior brother of Solomon, had, during the lifetime of David, exalted himself, and said, I will be king. He prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and kept fifty men to run before him. And with him were leagued the priest Abiathar and the general Joab, and many others; and they had a great banquet, and cried, God save king Adonijah. But when this was reported to king David, he commanded Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benajah the general, to conduct Solomon, accompanied by the rest of the courtiers, to Gihon, and there to proclaim him king. And they did accordingly. They made him ride on the royal mule, Zadok the priest anointed him, and all cried, God save king Solomon. And all the people came up after him, playing upon pipes, and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth shook with their noise. When those who were with Adonijah heard this, they were afraid, and went every man on his way. Soon after David's death, Adonijah and Joab were put to death, by Benaiah, at the command of Solomon. But Abiathar was supplanted in his office as priest of the Lord, in order to bring to pass the word of the Lord, which he had spoken in Shiloh, concerning the house of Eli. Solomon now sat upon the throne of his father David, and his government was firmly established. And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, by taking his daughter to be his wife; and he assigned to her a dwelling in the city of David, until he had completed the building of his house, of the temple and of the walls of Jerusalem. The people, at that time, still sacrificed in high places, because there was as yet no house built unto the name of the Lord. Solomon loved the Lord, and walked in the precepts of his father David, only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. One day, the king went to Gibeon, to sacrifice there, this being a celebrated hill for sacrifices. A thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar. Here, in Gibeon, the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and said to him, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon answered, Thou hast shown unto thy servant David my father great mercy, because he walked before thee in truth and in righteousness, and in uprightness of

heart, and thou hast continued this mercy even until now, having given him a son, who now occupieth his throne. O Lord, my God, thou hast appointed thy servant king instead of David my father; but I am yet an inexperienced youth, and know not how to govern. And thy servant liveth among a people which thou hast chosen, and which is so numerous that it cannot be counted for multitude. Impart, therefore, to thy servant a wise heart, to judge thy people, and to be able to discern between good and bad; for who could otherwise judge this great nation? And it pleased the Lord that Solomon asked this thing. And the Lord said to him, Because thou wishest but for this, and askest not long life, nor riches, nor the death of thine enemies, but understanding, in order to be able to judge correctly; behold, I will grant thy request, and impart to thee understanding and reason to a degree, in which none ever possessed them before thee, nor shall ever possess after thee: but also that which thou hast not asked I will give thee; thou shalt have riches and honour, so that none of the kings of thy times shall be like unto thee. And if thou walk in my ways, and keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did, then I will also give thee long life. When Solomon was awakened from his dream, he returned again to Jerusalem, and went before the ark of the covenant of the Lord to worship, offered burnt and peace-offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

II. SOLOMON'S WISE JUDGMENT.

"O Lord, impart thy judgments to the king, and thy justice to the son of the king." Psalm lxxii. 1.

About that time, two women came before the king. And one of them said, Pardon, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in *one* house, and in it I was delivered of a child. And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also; but we are the only inhabitants of the house, and besides us there is no one in it. Now this woman's child died in the past night, probably, because she lay upon it; and she arose at midnight, and took my child from beside me, while I, thy servant, was asleep, and laid it in her lap, and her dead child she laid in my lap. And when I arose in the morning to nurse my child, behold it was dead; but when I

looked at it closely, behold it was not my child that I did bear. And the other woman said, Nay, but the living child is mine, and thine is dead; whereupon the other said, No, but thine is the dead child, and mine the living: thus they contended before the king. And the king said, The one saith, My child is alive, and thine is dead; and the other saith, Thy child is dead, and mine is alive. The king continued and said, Bring me a sword. And the sword was brought before the king. And the king said, Cut the living child into two parts, and give a half to each of the women. Then entreated the woman, to whom the living child really belonged, and whose compassion was excited for her child, and said to the king, Have mercy, O my lord, let the living child be rather given to her, only do not slay it. But the other said, It shall be neither mine nor thine; let it be divided. Then the king answered and said, Let the living child be given to the former, and let it not be slain, *she is his mother*. When all Israel heard the judgment which the king had pronounced, they began to revere him; for they saw that divine wisdom was in him, to exercise justice.

III. SOLOMON'S GREAT RICHES. HIS EXTENSIVE POWER AND WISDOM.

Solomon now was king over all Israel. He also ruled over all the kingdoms that were situated between the river Euphrates and the country of the Philistines, unto the frontiers of Egypt. They brought him presents, and were subject to him all his life. On his table were consumed daily, thirty measures of fine flour, and sixty measures of meal, ten fat oxen, twenty oxen out of the pastures, a hundred sheep, besides harts, and roebucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl. Twelve officers, every man in his month, had to provide for the king's table, and were enjoined not to let any thing be wanting. He had forty thousand stables for his chariot-horses, and twelve thousand riding-horses. And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, so that he excelled in wisdom all the sages of the East and of Egypt, and his fame spread among all nations. He composed three thousand proverbs, and a thousand and five poems; and knew to speak of the whole vegetable kingdom, from the tall cedar on Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall, as well as

of all quadrupeds, birds, insects, and fishes. Therefore, people from all nations, even foreign kings, whom the report of Solomon's wisdom had reached, came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

IV. SOLOMON BUILDS THE TEMPLE.

"Except God himself build the temple, in vain is the artificers' labour; in vain is all the vigilance of the watchmen, unless God himself guard the city." Psalm cxxvii. 1.

HIRAM, king of Tyre, sent his servants unto Solomon to congratulate him, having heard that he had been anointed king in the room of his father David, for Hiram had ever been a friend to David. And Solomon sent back word to Hiram, saying, Thou knowest how my father David could not build a temple unto the Lord his God, for the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord laid all his enemies at his feet; but now that the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, and that I have no longer to fear an adversary or an evil occurrence, I am resolved to build a temple unto the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne after thee, he shall build a temple unto my name. Now, therefore command thou, that they hew me cedar-trees out of the woods of Lebanon; my servants shall assist thine, and I will pay the wages of thy servants according as thou shalt fix it thyself. When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he was greatly rejoiced, and said, Blessed be the Lord this day, who hath given to king David a wise son, to preside over this numerous people. And to Solomon he sent word, saying, I will do all that for which thou hast sent to me; and what thou askest concerning cedar and fir-trees, my servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea; there I will have them put on rafts, and conveyed to the place that thou shalt appoint. Thou in return shalt supply me with provisions for my household. So Hiram gave to Solomon cedar and fir-trees, according to all his desire. And Solomon gave to Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food for his household, and twenty measures of pure oil. This quantity Solomon had to furnish to Hiram annually. There was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and they entered into a friendly alliance. King Solomon now levied thirty thousand men out of all Israel

for carrying on the works. Of these he alternately sent ten thousand men to Lebanon, so that each of them always was one month in Lebanon, and two months at home. Solomon also had threescore and ten thousand who bore burdens, and eighty thousand hewers of stone in the mountains; besides the superintendents of the works, who amounted to three thousand three hundred. And it came to pass, in the four hundred and eightieth year from the departure of the children out of Egypt, and in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, that he began to build a temple unto the Lord. And the temple was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits broad, and thirty cubits high; and all the stones were left entire (for neither hammer, nor axe, nor any other iron tool was to be heard while the house was building). In the interior of the temple there was a space set apart of twenty cubits in length, and twenty in breadth; this was devoted to the most holy (also called Debir), and there the ark of the covenant of the Lord was deposited. On the east side of the temple there was a spacious antechamber, twenty cubits long, and ten cubits broad. And the building was surrounded with galleries, which were furnished with railings. And the word of the Lord came unto Solomon, saying, As for the house which thou buildest, if thou walk according to my laws, if thou heed my precepts, and carefully observe my commandments, then I will also fulfil unto thee what I promised unto thy father David: I will reside among the children of Israel, and never abandon my people. After the lapse of seven years, being the eleventh year of the reign of Solomon, in the eighth month, the temple was completed, with all that appertained to it. Two large brass pillars, eighteen cubits high, and twelve cubits in circumference, and ornamented with crowns and foliage, stood before the temple. Solomon also caused many vessels of polished brass to be made; but all the vessels in the interior of the temple, such as the table for the holy shew-bread, the altar with its appurtenances, the candlesticks and what belonged to them, the bowls, the musical instruments, even the hinges of the doors in the inner chambers, were all of the finest gold.

V. CONSECRATION OF THE TEMPLE.

"I will bring them to my holy mountain, and gladden them in my house of worship; their burnt-offerings and sacrifices shall be acceptable on mine altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." Isa. lvi. 7.

In the seventh month, being the Feast of Tabernacles, all Israel assembled unto king Solomon, to Jerusalem. The priests and Levites brought up the ark of the Lord, and the Tent of Assembly, with all the holy vessels, out of the city of David (i. e. Zion), into the temple. The king, and all the congregation of Israel, walked before the ark, and offered up a countless number of sheep and oxen for sacrifice. And the priests brought the ark of the covenant unto its appointed place, namely, the Most Holy. There was nothing in the ark, besides the two tables of stone, which Moses placed there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, subsequently to their departure from Egypt. And as the priests went out of the holy place, the glory of the Lord filled the house of God. And the king turned his face towards the congregation of Israel, and blessed them; and all the congregation stood up. Solomon then stepped forward to the altar of the Lord, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, knelt down, lifted up his hands towards heaven in prayer, and said, O Lord God of Israel, nothing is like unto thee, either in heaven above or on earth beneath; thou keepest thy covenant, and showest mercy to thy servants, who walk before thee with all their heart. Let thy words, I pray thee, O God of Israel, be verified, which thou didst speak unto thy servant David, my father. But will God indeed dwell here on earth? Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, how much less this house that I have built? Yet have thou respect, O my God, to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication; and hearken unto the fervent prayer, which thy servant now prayeth before thee. Let thine eyes be open, day and night, toward this house, and toward this place, of which thou hast said, My name shall be there. Hearken unto every prayer which thy servant shall offer up to thee in this place. And hearken to the supplications of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when they shall here call upon thee; hear thou it in the place where thou dwellest in heaven, hear and pardon. If any man commit a wrong towards his neighbour, and an oath

be laid upon him, and he that hath to swear, come before thine altar in this house, to perform the oath, then hear thou in heaven, and judge thou thy servants; condemn the guilty, and let his evil deed recoil upon his own head; justify the righteous, and render him according to his righteousness. If thy people Israel be pursued by enemies, because they sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication unto thee in this house, then hear thou in heaven, and forgive them their sins, and bring them back into the land which thou gavest unto their fathers. If heaven be shut up, and there be no rain, because of their sins, and they shall pray in this place, and call upon thy name, and turn from their sins, then hear thou their prayer in heaven, and forgive the sins of thy people; point out to them the good way wherein they should walk, and send again rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance. If there be famine in the land, if pestilence rage therein, or if it be visited by any other calamity; if their cities be invaded by the enemy, or by whatsoever plague or sickness; what supplication soever be made in this house, by any one of thy people Israel, who shall know every man the trouble of his own heart; then hear thou in heaven, where thou residest for ever, judge mercifully, and give to every man according to his deserts, according to the disposition of his heart, for thou alone knowest the hearts of all men. But even if a stranger[1] come, who is not of thy people Israel, but cometh from a distant country, for thy name's sake,—for they shall hear of thy great name, thy omnipotent hand, and stretched-out arm,—when then the stranger shall come, and pray in this house, hear thou in heaven, thy dwelling-place, and grant all for which the stranger calleth unto thee, that all the nations of the earth may acknowledge thy name, and that they may fear thee, as do thy people Israel, and know, that this house which I have built, is called by thy name. And when Solomon had concluded all this prayer before the Lord, he arose from the place before the altar, stood up, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, and said, Blessed be the Lord that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to his promise, and who hath not left unfulfilled one word of his

[1] That is, a heathen. The wise king excludes no man, of whatever nation, creed, or colour, from his prayer, thereby showing us that we are bound to do likewise.

promises, which he declared through his servant Moses. May the Lord our God continue to be with us, as he was with our fathers; may he never abandon, never reject us, but incline our hearts unto himself, that we walk in all his ways, and observe all his commandments, laws, and precepts, which he commanded our fathers. And let these, my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God, day and night, that he may vindicate the right of his servant and of his people Israel at all times, and in all matters; thereby shall all the nations of the earth acknowledge that the Lord alone is God, and none besides him. But be ye also of undivided heart towards the Lord our God, walk according to his statutes, and observe his commandments, as ye do this day.

And the king and all Israel then offered up many sacrifices before the Lord. And the number of peace (or joy) offerings, which Solomon offered up to the Lord, was two and twenty thousand oxen, and twenty thousand sheep. Hereby the king and all Israel consecrated the temple. And Solomon, and all Israel with him, celebrated a feast of fourteen days before the Lord, namely, seven days as a feast of consecration, and seven days as the feast of tabernacles. On the eighth day (of the feast of tabernacles, viz. on the concluding day) he dismissed the people; and they blessed the king, and went home joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the Lord had shown unto David his servant, and unto Israel his people.

VI. THE LORD AGAIN APPEARS UNTO SOLOMON. THE QUEEN OF SHEBA. INCREASING PROSPERITY OF SOLOMON AND OF THE COUNTRY.

THE Lord appeared unto Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him in Gibeon. And he said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and thy supplication to me; I will hallow this house which thou hast built unto my name, and my eyes and my heart shall ever be directed towards it. And if thou wilt walk before me with sincerity, as did David thy father, and ever observe my laws and precepts, then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But if ye revolt from me, and do not observe my laws and commandments, and follow other gods, to worship them, then will I exterminate Israel from the land which I have given them,

and this temple will I cast out of my sight, so that Israel shall be an example and a lesson to all nations.

The queen of Sheba[1] heard of the fame of Solomon, which he had acquired through the name of the Lord, and undertook a journey to Solomon, to test his wisdom by hard questions. She arrived in Jerusalem, with a very great retinue, and her camels were laden with all kinds of spices, very much gold, and precious stones. And she went to see Solomon, and conversed with him, as she had proposed to herself. But Solomon answered all her questions, and there was not any thing hidden from the king, that he could not tell her. And when the queen of Sheba saw all the wise arrangements of Solomon, the newly-built palace, his table, his court, the attendance of his servants and their apparel, and lastly, the sacrifices which he offered in the temple, she was struck with amazement. And she said to the king, All is true that I heard of thee in my country; I would not believe it, until I came myself ,and saw with mine own eyes; now, however, I find that not half was told me, inasmuch as thy wisdom and excellence exceedeth all that I ever heard them tell of thee. O, how happy are thy men, how happy are these thy servants, who are constantly about thy person, and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, that he delighted in thee to elevate thee to the throne of Israel. It is surely because he loveth his people Israel that he hath appointed thee king over them, in order that virtue and justice be practised. And she presented to the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and a great quantity of spices and precious stones. There never afterwards came such an abundance of spices into the land, as the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. And the king gave to the queen of Sheba many valuable presents, as it became his royal dignity. She then returned, with her retinue, to her own country.

King Solomon received much gold, almug-wood,[2] and precious stones, from Ophir, by the ships which he, in conjunction with Hiram, sent out thither. He also constantly had a ship at sea, joined to Hiram's fleet, which made the voyage of Tarshish (Spain), and returned once in three years, with a cargo of gold, silver, elephants, monkeys, and peacocks. Besides this, he received, for presents, great quantities of silver,

[1] A celebrated queen of Arabia Felix.

[2] A rare and valuable wood, perhaps ebony. (According to others, Brazil-wood. Tr.)

gold, weapons, garments, spices, and horses, from distant kings. And there was so much gold in Solomon's time that silver had not any value. The king had two hundred targets, and three hundred shields, made of the finest gold; and he had them deposited in the summer-house of the forest of Lebanon. He also had a great ivory throne made, and overlaid with fine gold. This throne had six steps, and at the top was a round vault, turned over backwards; and on either side of the seat were stays, to which were fixed two lions; and on either side of the six steps stood twelve lions; the like of it was never made in any kingdom. All the drinking-vessels of the king, as well as all the vessels of the summer-house in the forest of Lebanon, were of pure gold. So king Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in wealth and in wisdom.

VII. SOLOMON'S TRANSGRESSION, AND THE EVIL CONSEQUENCES THEREOF. JEROBOAM. SOLOMON'S DEATH.

But Solomon acted sinfully by having many women of strange nations for wives and concubines; of the nations, concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Go not amongst them, neither let them come amongst you, for they will surely turn your heart after their gods. Solomon had seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, who entirely swayed his heart, so that they misled him in his old age, to follow after other gods; and his heart was no longer so perfectly devoted to the Lord his God as was the heart of David his father; for he caused high places to be erected for the abominations of idols, and there his strange wives burnt incense, and sacrificed to their gods. Thus Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord.[1] And the Lord was angry with Solomon, for that his heart was diverted from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared unto him twice, and he, notwithstanding, heeded not the command of God, not to go after other gods. Wherefore

[1] Even the wisest of men, who hath bequeathed to us such excellent proverbs and precepts, was unable, ultimately, to resist the seductive allurements of luxury and sensuality, forgot himself in his wealth and prosperity, and fell into the snare of folly and sin; so that he was, indeed, wise in his sayings, but foolish in his doings. Hereby Holy Writ holds out to us a lesson, that we may impress it on our minds, and be on our guard, when in the enjoyment of earthly happiness. Pious humility, a consideration of the vanity and frailty of the temporal blessings, of the real and apparent value of life, and of our destiny,—such are the only and best means whereby to escape the snares of corruption.

the Lord said unto Solomon, Because thou actest thus, and keepest not my covenant and my statutes, I will rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. However, for David thy father's sake, I will not do it in thy days, but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son; nevertheless, I will leave him one tribe (as a kingdom), for David my servant's sake, and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen. The Lord now raised an adversary unto Solomon, namely, Hadad, of the royal family of Edom; and a certain Rezon, who had deserted from his lord, the king of Zoba. These men troubled Solomon and his kingdom. Jeroboam, too, a valiant young man, of the tribe of Ephraim, who was in the service of Solomon, rose in rebellion against the king. The cause of this was as follows: Jeroboam, being one day in the field before Jerusalem, was met by Ahijah, the Shilonite: they were both alone. And the prophet seized the garment which he wore, rent it in twelve pieces, and said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and give ten tribes of it to thee; and it shall be, if thou wilt walk in my ways, and do what is right in my sight, and observe my laws and my commandments, as did David my servant, that I will be with thee, and establish for thee a lasting house in Israel. Solomon, therefore, sought to kill Jereboam, but he fled into Egypt, unto Shishak, the king thereof, where he remained until Solomon died. And Solomon died, after having reigned over all Israel forty years, and was interred in the city of David his father. His son Rehoboam succeeded him on the throne.

VIII. REHOBOAM REJECTS THE ADVICE OF THE AGED COUNSELLORS, WHEREUPON TEN TRIBES REVOLT FROM HIM, SO THAT ISRAEL IS HENCEFORTH SPLIT INTO TWO HOUSES, THAT OF JUDAH AND THAT OF ISRAEL.

"The fool's own mouth is his destruction; his lips are the snare of his soul."
Prov. xviii. 7.

Rehoboam now went to Shechem, for thither all Israel were come to acknowledge him as king. The congregation of Israel addressed Rehoboam, and said, Thy father imposed a heavy yoke upon us, now, therefore, lighten thou our burdens,

and we will willingly be subject to thee. And he replied, Depart for the present, and come again to me after three days. So the people departed. Rehoboam now consulted with the old men, who had served Solomon his father. And they said unto him, If thou now wilt show thyself indulgent to the people, and speak to them in a conciliatory tone, then they will be submissive to thee for the whole of thy life. But Rehoboam forsook the counsel of these old men, and consulted with the young men, who had grown up with him. And they advised him to answer the people in a harsh manner, and to say to them, I will make your yoke still heavier; for my little finger is (as it were) thicker than my father's loins.[1] So when the people came back the third day, Jeroboam also being with them, the king answered them harshly, and said, My father imposed a heavy yoke upon you, but I will render it yet heavier; my father chastised you with rods, but I will scourge you with scorpions. So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, they answered him, We have no share in David's house: and so they departed. Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, the tax-gatherer, to them, with a message, but the people of Israel stoned him to death; the king himself had but a narrow escape, and fled to Jerusalem. All Israel now sent and called Jeroboam to their assembly, and appointed him king over themselves. Those only of the children of Israel, who lived in the cities of Judah and Benjamin, still remained attached to king Rehoboam; the remaining ten tribes threw off their allegiance to the house of David.[2]

IX. JEROBOAM'S EVIL DEEDS. A DIVINE MAN APPEARS UNTO HIM. THE WIFE OF JEROBOAM COMES TO THE PROPHET AHIJAH.

"Wisdom is preferable to weapons of war, but one sinner can destroy much good." Eccles. ix. 18.

JEROBOAM now thought within himself, If the people should go up to Jerusalem for the performance of divine service, their

[1] Meaning thereby, "My power and my authority are much greater than those of my father."

[2] Such were the unhappy results of Rehoboam's folly, in rejecting the prudent counsel of the aged and experienced, and listening to that of inconsiderate youths, amongst whom there were perhaps some who purposely gave such dangerous advice, with a view to ruin the inflated fool. Age has experience and foresight. Happy the youth who acts on the rational advice of the aged.

hearts might easily turn again unto Rehoboam, and then they would kill me, and return to the king of Judah. And having taken counsel on this matter, he had two calves of gold[1] made, and said to the people, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem, behold, O Israel, these are thy gods, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt: and he set up the one calf at Beth-el, and the other at Dan.[2] This led the people to commit sin (for they even went as far as Dan to sacrifice to the idols). He also erected temples on the high places, appointed priests of the lowest class of the people to minister therein, and ordained new feasts. One day, it being a feast of his ordaining, as he himself ascended the altar in Beth-el, to burn incense thereon, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah, by the command of the Lord, and exclaimed, O altar, altar! thus saith the Lord, Behold, a son shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; he shall offer upon thee the priests of the high places, who burn incense upon thee, and cause men's bones to be burnt upon thee. The man of God also gave a token of his divine mission, saying, This altar shall be rent, and the ashes upon it scattered. When the king heard these words, he stretched forth his hand over the altar, and cried, Seize him. But the stretched-out hand became stiff, so that he could not draw it back. The altar also burst, and the ashes upon it were scattered, as the man of God had predicted, in the name of the Lord.[3] The king then said to the divine man, Entreat now the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that I may have the use of my hand restored to me. The man of God prayed unto the Lord, and the king's hand became again as it had been before. Then said the king to him, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will make thee a present.

[1] A species of idolatry, originally derived from Egypt, and customary among several neighbouring nations.

[2] Dan and Bethel were the extreme frontier towns, the former in the North, and the latter in the South, of the dominion of Jeroboam (i. e. of the house of Israel).

[3] Jeroboam acted, as selfish men often do, who always having their own advantage in view, resort to the most unjust means, which opportunity presents to them, without for a moment thinking on God, or on a future, or on a divine retribution. The new king wished to secure his throne for himself, even by sinful means, forgetting that the Lord had promised to establish him a permanent house only on this condition, that he walk in His ways, and do what is right in His sight. Jeroboam became an idolater, and a seducer of his people; hence the promise announcing a blessing and happiness was justly withdrawn, while that announcing woe and punishment was fulfilled.

But the man of God answered, If thou would give me half thy house I would not go with thee, neither would I eat or drink ought in this city; for so it hath been commanded to me in the name of the Lord, Thou shalt not eat nor drink ought in this place, nor return by the same way that thou camest. But there dwelt an old man (a false prophet) in Beth-el, and he had heard from his sons the whole of this occurrence. He mounted his ass, and rode after the man of God. And he found him sitting under a terebinth, and said unto him, Come home with me, and partake of some food. And he said, I may not; for the Lord forbade me returning, and eating or drinking in this place. But he said unto him, I am a prophet like thou art; and an angel hath told me, in the name of the Lord, to bring thee back into my house, that thou shouldest eat and drink with me. But he lied unto him in this: and the other suffered himself to be prevailed on, went back, and did eat and drink with him. And it came to pass, as they sat at table, that the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Forasmuch as thou hast acted contrary to my commandment, thy body shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. When they had finished eating and drinking, he departed thence on his ass. But a lion fell upon him by the way, and killed him; his corpse lay stretched on the road, and the lion stood by it. And the men who went past came and reported it in the city; and when the (false) prophet heard it, he said, That is the prophet who was disobedient unto the word of the Lord, therefore the Lord hath delivered him unto the lion, that he slew him, as God had decreed against him. And the prophet rode to the spot, took up the corpse, and laid it on the ass, and came with it to the city to inter and to mourn over it. And they laid him in a grave, and they mourned over him, saying, "Alas, my brother!" After they had buried him, the old prophet said to his children, When I shall be dead, then bury me in the sepulchre of the divine man, lay my bones beside his bones; for all that he predicted concerning the altar in Beth-el, and the high places of the idols in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass. Notwithstanding all these things, Jeroboam did not desist from his evil way.

At that time, Abijah, the son of Jeroboam, was taken ill. And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and get thee to Shiloh; there dwelleth Ahijah, the prophet, who fore-

told me that I should be king over Israel. But disguise thyself, lest it should be known that thou art my wife. Take also ten loaves, some cakes, and a cruse of honey; bring these to the prophet, and he will tell thee what shall become of the child. Jeroboam's wife did so. Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were set, by reason of his old age; but the Lord had already informed him of the arrival of the woman. And when she came in, she feigned being another woman; Ahijah, however, called to her, as he heard the sounds of her steps, and said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam, why feignest thou being another? I have a heavy message for thee, Go, tell Jeroboam, thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I exalted thee, from among the people, to be the ruler over my people Israel; but thou hast provoked my anger, for thou hast done more evil than ever was committed before thee, and hast cast me behind thy back; therefore, will I bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, so that nothing shall be left of him; yea, I will clear out the house of Jeroboam, as one cleareth away dung, till nothing remaineth of it. But arise thou, and return home; as soon as thy feet enter the city, the child shall die. And at his funeral, all Israel shall mourn for him, and he shall be the only one of Jeroboam's family who shall be laid in a grave, because he is the only one in the family in whom the Lord, the God of Israel, hath found some good thing. But the Lord shall also smite Israel, that they shall be shaken as a reed in the water, and he shall scatter them beyond the river,[1] and deliver them up to the enemy. Such are the consequences of the sins of Jeroboam, which he committed, and whereby he seduced the people. Jeroboam's wife now arose, and went back to Tirzah; and when she came to the threshold of her door, the child died. They buried him, and all Israel put on mourning for him, as the Lord had spoken through his servant, the prophet Ahijah. When Jeroboam had reigned two and twenty years, he died, and was succeeded by his son Nadab.

[1] That is, the Euphrates, in the countries of Assyria, over which the ten tribes of Israel were subsequently dispersed by Salmanassar.

X. THE KINGS REHOBOAM, ABIJAM, AND ASA.

REHOBOAM, the king of Judah, also did evil in the sight of the Lord. The people of Judah built high places, and planted groves, with images in them, and imitated all the abominations of the nations which the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. Therefore it came to pass, in the fifth year of the reign of Rehoboam, that Shishak, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem. And he took away the treasures of the temple, as well as those of the royal palace, and all other precious things; among them the golden shields, which Solomon had caused to be made. And there was constantly war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. When Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, had reigned forty-one years, he died, and Abijam his son reigned in his stead. But he likewise did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father had done. After a reign of three years he died, and his son Asa succeeded him. And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, like David his ancestor. He abolished all the abominations in the land, and brought various gold and silver vessels into the temple for sacred purposes. And when Baasha, king of Israel, made war with him, he took all that was left of the treasures of the temple and of the royal palace, and sent them to Benhadad, king of Syria, for a present, that he might form an alliance with him, and assist him against the king of Israel. Benhadad complied with king Asa's request, and aided him with his army, whereupon Baasha discontinued the war. After a reign of forty-one years, Asa departed this life, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his ancestor. Jehoshaphat, his son, reigned in his stead.

XI. AHAB. THE PROPHET ELIJAH.

"O, how excellent wast thou Elijah, in thy wondrous deeds! Who so excellent as thou." Sirach xlviii. 3.

THE seventh king of Israel[1] was Ahab, the son of Omri. And Ahab reigned two and twenty years in Samaria.[2] And he did

[1] It must never be lost sight of, that henceforth we speak of two houses, viz. Israel and Judah.

[2] In Hebrew Shomron. Omri had purchased of one Shemer, a mountain,

evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who lived before him; for he not only practised the sins of Jeroboam, and other kings in Israel, but he also took to wife *Jezebel*, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and worshipped Baal, for whom he erected a temple and an altar in Samaria, and planted groves. Thus he provoked the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger, more than all the kings who preceded him. At that time there was a famine in the land, for the Lord had shut up the heavens, so that it rained not for a long time. And the prophet Elijah, the Tishbite, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, whom I serve, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and conceal thyself by the brook Cherith, which floweth into Jordan; of this brook thou canst drink, and I have bid the ravens to feed thee there. Elijah did accordingly. And the raven brought him bread and flesh, both in the morning and in the evening; and he drank of the brook. But after some time the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. Then the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephah, which is situated near Zidon; there I have commanded a widow to sustain thee. Elijah went thither; and when he entered the gate of the city, a widow was there, gathering wood; he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel that I may drink. And when she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread also. But she replied, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have nothing but a handful of flour, and a little oil; when that is consumed, I and my child must surely die. Then Elijah said unto her, Do but make a little cake thereof, and bring it unto me; afterwards thou mayest also prepare for thee and for thy son; for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, The barrel shall not lack flour, nor the cruse oil, until the day that the Lord shall again send rain upon the earth. And she went and did as the prophet had told her, and she had for a long time provisions for herself and her household. And it came to pass, after these things, that the son of the woman was taken ill, and his illness was so serious that there was no life to be perceived in him. And the woman said to

and built a city upon it, which received the name of Shomron, and thenceforward became the residence of the kings of Israel. The previous residence of the kings of Israel was at Tirzah.

Elijah, Man of God, truly thou art come to me only to call my sins to remembrance, so that my son must die for them. And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her arms, and carried him up into the room which he occupied in the house, and laid him upon his own bed. And he stretched himself upon the child three times, entreated the Lord, and said, O Lord, my God, I pray thee, let the vital spirits of this child return into his body. And the Lord heard the prayer of the prophet Elijah, and the child revived. Elijah now took the child, and carried him out of his room down into the lower part of the house, and delivered him into his mother's arms, and said, See, thy son liveth. Then the woman said to Elijah, Hereby I know that thou art a divine man, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.

XII. ELIJAH'S INTERVIEW WITH AHAB. HE CONFOUNDS THE PROPHETS OF BAAL. HIS FLIGHT. ELISHA.

It came to pass in the third year of the famine, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah, as follows: Go, show thyself unto Ahab, for I will again send rain upon the earth. The famine was then very grievous in Samaria. And Elijah betook himself on his way, and he met Obadiah, the governor of Ahab's palace. Obadiah fell down on his face, and said, Art thou it indeed, my lord Elijah? Now Obadiah was a man who greatly feared the Lord; for when Jezebel was about to extirpate the prophets of the Lord, he took a hundred of them, and concealed them by fifties in a cave, and supplied them with food and drink. Obadiah informed Ahab of Elijah's arrival, whereupon Ahab went to meet Elijah. And when he saw him, he called unto him, Is it thou, mischief-maker in Israel?[1] But Elijah replied, It is not I who have brought trouble upon Israel, but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the Lord, and followed the service of Baal. Send, however, now, and order all Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel, together with the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of the grove, who eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent and ordered them to meet on Mount Carmel. Then Elijah stepped forward, and addressed the

[1] Ahab accused him of having caused the famine, which he had announced to him in the name of the Lord.

people, and said, How long will ye yet waver in your minds? If the Lord be the true God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And Elijah continued and said to the people, I alone remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them now give us two bullocks, and let them choose one of them for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and likewise put no fire under. Then call ye on the name of your god, whilst I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be the true God. Hereupon all the people answered and said, The proposal is good. And Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, Choose one bullock for yourselves, for ye are the more numerous party. They did so, dressed the bullock, and called on Baal from morning until noon. And Elijah mocked them, and said, Ye must shout more loudly, for he is a god; it may be he is talking, or pursuing enemies, or taking a walk, or perhaps he is asleep, and must be awakened. So they indeed called with a loud voice, and cut themselves after their manner, so that blood gushed out from their wounds. When they had thus continued their folly until evening-time, Elijah said to all the people, Come near unto me; and all the people approached him. He now built an altar, and intrenched it round about. He then put the wood in order, dressed the bullock, and laid it on the wood; and having ordered water to be several times poured over the sacrifice and the wood, and the trench to be filled with water, he addressed himself to the Lord, and prayed, O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art Lord in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the true God. Then a fire came down from the Lord, and consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the earth, and licked up even the water in the trench. When the people saw this, they fell on their faces, and exclaimed, *The Lord is the true God! The Lord is the true God!*

When, after this, the prophets of Baal had been slain by the people, Elijah said to Ahab, Eat and drink, for soon the noise of a heavy rain shall be heard. Soon after, Elijah sent word unto Ahab, through his servant, saying, Prepare thy chariot and depart, ere the rain overtake thee. Meanwhile, the clouds

gathered in the sky, a wind arose, and a heavy rain followed. Ahab mounted his chariot, and drove to Jezreel. And a divine strength came upon Elijah, so that he ran before Ahab, until he came to Jezreel.

Ahab now told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal, how he had caused all the prophets of Baal to be slain. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, So let the gods punish me for ever, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. Elijah, therefore, fled into the desert, and sat down under a juniper-tree, saying, I have now lived long enough, O Lord, take away my life, for what am I better than my ancestors? But as he lay and slept under the tree, behold, an angel touched him, and said, Arise and eat. He looked up, and saw at his head a cake, and a cruse of water; and he did eat and drink, and laid himself down again. And when, some time after, he lodged in a cave overnight, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, What dost thou here, Elijah? He replied, I have been zealous for thee, Lord God Zebaoth. Thy people Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; I alone am now left, but they seek also my life to take it away. And a voice said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold the Lord passed by; and before the Lord came a great and powerful storm, that rendeth mountains and splitteth rocks; but the Lord was not in the storm. After the storm, followed an earthquake; after the earthquake, came a fire; but the Lord appeared not in the fire. After the fire, a still small voice was heard.[1] And when Elijah heard this, he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and placed himself in the entrance of his cave. And the word of the Lord came unto him as follows, Go, return on thy way through the desert, and anoint Jehu, the son of Nimshi, to be king over Israel; and consecrate Elisha, the son of Shaphat, to be prophet in thy stead. So Elijah departed thence, and met Elisha, as he was ploughing. Twelve yoke of oxen went before him, and he was with the twelfth. And Elijah passed by him, and threw his mantle around him.

[1] Perhaps this vision was intended to show the prophet symbolically the leniency and compassion of the heavenly Father, who, after having sent forth the raging storm of punishment, causes his salutary sun of grace and love to shine upon his children. And he, the prophet, who was dejected and weary of life should thereby be consoled and encouraged to proceed on his divine mission.

Elisha immediately left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Permit me, I pray thee, to go and kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he replied, Go, and return. Elisha did return, slew a yoke of oxen, and boiled their flesh with the wood of the harness of the oxen, and set it before his men that they might eat. Then he arose and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

XIII. THE VINEYARD OF NABOTH. AHAB'S DEATH.

INJUSTICE, VILLANOUS WICKEDNESS, FALSE TESTIMONY, AND MURDER, THE CONSEQUENCES OF A CULPABLE COVETOUSNESS.

"The pious man is content with what God bestoweth, but the man of wicked devices coveteth unjust good." Prov. xii. 2.

After this event, the following took place: Naboth, the Jezreelite, had a vineyard, close by the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria. One day, Ahab said to Naboth, Let me have thy vineyard, that I may use it for a kitchen-garden, because it is near to my palace; in return I will give thee a better vineyard, or, if thou prefer it, I will give thee the value in money. But Naboth said, The Lord forbid that I should give up the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. Hereupon Ahab went home, ill-pleased and vexed, laid himself down upon his bed, and averted his face, and would not eat. Jezebel, his wife, came to him and asked him, Why art thou so sad, and refusest to eat? And he said to her, Because I spoke unto Naboth, and requested him to let me have his vineyard, either for money or in exchange for another vineyard; and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. And Jezebel said, Doest thou only now commence to rule over Israel? Arise, eat, and be merry; I will take care thou shalt have the vineyard. So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent them to the elders and to the nobles of the city where Naboth dwelt. In these letters she wrote as follows, Proclaim ye a general fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.[1] And let two reprobate men appear as

[1] On days of general fast, it was customary to examine into the conduct of the congregation in general, and of every individual in particular, i. e. to do penitence, in order to show repentance for iniquities and sins committed, and to amend. Here we may see how men make use of religion, even for the most wicked actions, as a means whereby to compass their ends. What a triumph this

witnesses against him, and say, "Thou didst blaspheme God and the king." Then take him out of the city, and stone him to death. The elders and nobles of his city did as Jezebel had instructed them in her letters.[1] They had a fast proclaimed, and set Naboth on high among the people. And two reprobate men sat opposite to him, and gave evidence against him, the innocent man, in the presence of all the people, saying, "Naboth did blaspheme God and the king." Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him to death. And they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. Jezebel now said to Ahab, Arise, and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, which he refused to give thee for money; for Naboth exists no longer. When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth, to take possession of it. But the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go to meet the king of Israel, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord, What! hast thou killed, and now wilt also be the heir? Know, however, saith the Lord, that on the spot where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, they shall also lick thy blood. Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou again found something against me, O mine enemy? And he answered, Certainly, I have found against thee that thou hast sold thyself to do only that which displeaseth the Lord. Behold, saith the Lord God, I will bring evil upon thee, and exterminate thy house, like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, because thou hast thus provoked me to anger, and seduced Israel to sin. And upon Jezebel, too, the Lord hath passed sentence, and said, In the vale of Jezreel the dogs shall devour Jezebel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city, the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field, shall the fowls of the air eat. When Ahab heard these words, he rent his garments, put on sackcloth, fasted, and walked about with a dejected head. Then the word of the Lord again came unto Elijah, as follows: Seest thou, how Ahab humbleth himself before me?[2] And because he

for religion! Even the most impious cannot dispense with it. True, they shamefully abuse the most sacred object, but ultimately this proves a snare to ruin them; the crime is doubly avenged.

[1] "Like master, like servant," says the common adage. Those elders of the city agreed with the wicked Jezebel about this bad deed. The people were deceived in the sentence.

[2] Sincere contrition and penitence are the most acceptable atonement to the Lord. Ahab had committed himself grievously, and yet the Lord pardoned him.

doth so, I will not bring the threatened calamity in his days; but in his son's days will I let it come to pass over his house.

When Ahab was engaged in a battle against Aram, he was wounded by an arrow. The blood flowed out of the wound into the chariot. And when they washed his chariot and his armour, the dogs licked up his blood, as God had caused it to be foretold. Ahab died of his wound the evening of that day, and was buried in Samaria. His son Ahaziah reigned in his stead.

XIV. JEHOSHAPHAT, KING IN JUDAH.[1]

"When the righteous govern, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the nation sigheth." Prov. xxix. 2.

"The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but victory belongeth to the Lord." Prov. xxi. 31.

JEHOSHAPHAT, the son of Asa, reigned over Judah five and twenty years. He walked entirely in the way of his father, and did what seemed good in the eyes of the Lord. He also constantly lived in peace with the king of Israel. And he travelled round the country, in order to bring back his subjects to the Lord, the God of their fathers, from whom they were departed. He also appointed judges in the cities of the country; and he said to the judges, Consider what ye do; ye do not judge for man, but for the Lord, and he is with you in matters of judgment. Let therefore the fear of the Lord be upon you, and take heed unto what ye do; for the Lord our God knoweth no injustice, no regard of persons, no bribe. He, moreover, appointed judges in Jerusalem, and exhorted them to fear the Lord and to exercise justice.

And it came to pass after this, that neighbouring nations came to make war upon Jehoshaphat. Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea, and behold they are already near En-gedi. And Jehoshaphat was afraid, and prepared himself to supplicate the Lord, and ordered a fast to be proclaimed in all Judah. The inhabitants of Judah also assembled to pray to the Lord for his assistance, and they came from all the cities to seek the Lord. And Jehoshaphat stood among the

"For the Lord desireth not that the wicked perish, but that he turn from his way and live." Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

[1] Vide 2 Chron. xix. xx.

assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of God, before the new court, and said, O Lord God of our fathers, who residest in heaven, and rulest over all the empires and nations of the earth; in thy hand is power and might, and none is able to withstand thee. Thou, O Lord, didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the posterity of Abraham, thy beloved, for ever. They settled therein, and built a sanctuary in honour of thy name, and prayed as follows, If a calamity come upon us, as war, judgment, pestilence, or famine, we will appear before thee in this house, because thy name is in it, and call upon thee in our distress, that thou mayest hear and deliver us. And now, behold, the nations of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, are coming against us; nations, through whose dominion thou wouldst not let the children of Israel pass, when they came out of Egypt, and whom they, therefore, did no harm. These nations now come to expel us from the possessions which thou hast given us to inherit. O our God, thou wilt judge them, for we cannot resist this great multitude. We know not what to do, and unto thee alone are our eyes directed. During this time, all the inhabitants of Judah, with their wives and children, stood before the Lord. Then came the spirit of God, in the midst of the assembly, upon Jahaseel, the son of Zechariah, of the tribe of Levi. And he said, Hearken ye, all ye inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem; and thou, king Jehoshaphat, hearken, Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude, for this battle is not your's but God's. To-morrow, go ye down against them; ye shall find them at the end of the valley. Then ye shall see the salvation of the Lord for you, inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. Fear not, nor be dismayed. To-morrow go out against them, and the Lord will be with you. Hereupon Jehoshaphat bowed himself with his face to the ground, and all the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem prostrated themselves before the Lord, and worshipped. And the Levites chaunted a loud hymn of praise and thanksgiving unto the God of Israel. The morning after they marched out, and Jehoshaphat said to them, Hear me, O ye inhabitants of Judah and of Jerusalem, Believe in the Lord your God, and ye shall be preserved; believe in his prophets, and ye shall prosper. The holy singers preceded the vanguard, and chaunted, Thank the Lord, for his goodness endureth for ever. And the Lord

caused a confusion among the nations, so that they made war upon, and slew each other. And when the men of Judah came up to the hostile multitude, behold, the corpses lay stretched on the ground, none had escaped. And Jehoshaphat and his people took the spoil of the whole country, an abundance of riches and precious jewels; and they were three days gathering the spoil, so much was there of it. On the fourth day, they assembled in the valley, and called it *Valley of Praise*, because there they praised the Lord. Then they returned, with king Jehoshaphat at their head, joyfully to Jerusalem. And they entered the house of the Lord with psalteries, and harps, and trumpets. And the terror of God was upon all the neighbouring kingdoms and countries, when they heard how the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel. So the realm of Jehoshaphat obtained peace, and God gave him rest round about. After having reigned twenty and five years, he departed this life, and was succeeded by his son Jehoram.

XV. AHAZIAH'S INCREDULITY AND DIVINE PUNISHMENT.

"The wicked in his haughtiness careth for nothing; *there is no God*, are all his thoughts." Psalm x. 4.

Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, was king over Israel. And he walked in the evil ways of his father, and did that which displeased the Lord. One day he fell down from the upper story of his palace, and became ill; then he sent messengers to Baal-zebub, the god of the Philistines, at Ekron, to inquire of him whether he should recover. And an angel of the Lord said to Elijah, as follows: Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, Is there no God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub, the idol at Ekron? Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not rise again from the bed on which thou liest, but shalt surely die. The messengers returned, and told the king what Elijah had said unto them. Then the king forthwith dispatched a captain with fifty men, to fetch Elijah. He happened to be on the summit of a hill. The captain addressed him, and said, Thou man of God, the king commandeth thee to come down. And Elijah answered and said, If I be a man of God, then let fire descend from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came

down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. The king again sent a captain with fifty men to the prophet, and they experienced the same fate as the former. And the king once more sent a captain with fifty men. And the third captain came up to Elijah, prostrated himself before him on his knees, besought him, and said, Oh, man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty, thy servants, be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and consumed the first two captains, together with their fifties, therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight. And an angel of the Lord said unto Elijah, Go down with him; be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king, and said to him, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, as if Israel had no God, whose word could be inquired after, therefore thou shalt not rise from the bed on which thou art lying, but shalt surely die. So he died, according to the sentence of the Lord, which Elijah had announced, and Jehoram reigned in his stead.

XVI. ELIJAH'S ASCENT TO HEAVEN. HIS PROPHETICAL SPIRIT GIVEN TO ELISHA.

Elijah and Elisha departed together from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me unto Beth-el. But Elisha answered, As the Lord liveth, and as thou livest, I will not leave thee: so they went together to Beth-el. And the disciples of the prophets at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thee to-day? He replied, Yea, I know it; be ye but quiet. Elijah again said unto him, Stay here,[1] I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. Elisha, however, replied as before, As the Lord liveth, and as thou livest, I will not leave thee: so they continued their journey together. And fifty men of the disciples of the prophets went and stood at a distance, opposite to them; but they two stood by Jordan. Elijah took his mantle, and smote the waters with it, and they were divided hither and thither, so that the two went through on dry ground. While

[1] Not that the holy man wanted to belie his pious disciple; for the ascent to heaven, which he expected would have taken place in one of those places, but he wished to spare his beloved Elisha the grief at parting.

crossing over, Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. Thou askest much, replied Elijah, nevertheless, if thou can see me when I am taken away from thee, thy wish shall be fulfilled; but if not, it shall not be so. And as they still went on, and conversed, behold, there came a chariot of fire, with horses of fire, and parted them asunder, and Elijah went up in a storm to heaven. Elisha saw it, and cried, Oh, my father! my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof! And when he had lost sight of him, he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He then took up the mantle which had fallen from Elijah, and returned, and remained yet awhile standing by the bank of Jordan. And he took the mantle, and smote the waters therewith, and said, Where art thou,[1] O Lord God of Elijah? and the waters were divided for him also, and he passed through. When the disciples of the prophets of Jericho, that were standing opposite, saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah resteth upon Elisha. They went to meet him, and prostrated themselves before him. And they said unto him, Let us send out, we pray thee, fifty men, to seek thy master; perchance a storm of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. Elisha replied, Send ye not. But when they became very importunate, he at length said, Well, then, send. So they sent out fifty men; and these sought three days, but found him not. When they returned unto him (for he had tarried at Jericho), he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

XVII. DIVINE MIRACLES WROUGHT BY THE PROPHET ELISHA.

The men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, the situation of this city is good, as my lord seeth, but the water is bad, and the ground barren. And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. They brought it to him. And he went out unto the spring of the waters, cast the salt into it, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I now have healed these waters; henceforth they shall not cause any more death or sterility. So the

[1] Meaning, Where is thy help? Wilt thou perform wonders for me, even as thou didst for Elijah?

waters had thereby become pure, and remained so until this day, according to the words of Elisha.

And he went up thence to Beth-el. And as he was going on the way, there came little boys out of the city, and mocked, calling unto him, Come up, thou bald-head; come up, thou bald-head. He turned back, looked at them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two bears out of the wood, and tore of them forty-two boys.[1] He went thence to Mount Carmel, and thence he returned to Samaria.

The widow of one of the disciples of the prophets, one day came up to Elisha, crying, and said, Thy servant, my husband is dead; thou knowest how he feared the Lord, and now his creditor is come, and will take my two sons to be slaves. Elisha replied, What can I do for thee? Yet tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she answered, Thy handmaid hath nothing in the house save a small remnant of oil. Then he said, Go borrow thee vessels without doors, of all thy neighbours, empty vessels, and not few of them. Having done so, go home, shut thyself up with thy children, pour out into all those vessels, and as thou hast filled one, put it aside. So she went from him, borrowed vessels, and shut herself up with her children; the children handed her the vessels, and she poured out into them. When at length the vessels were full, she said to one of her sons, Hand me yet a vessel. But he replied, There is not any more: and now the oil ceased to flow. Then she came and told the divine man, and he said, Go, now, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, the rest will support thee and thy children.

One day, Elisha went to Shunem, and a great woman there constrained him to eat with her. And from that time forward he turned in at her house as oft as he passed by. One day, the woman said to her husband, Behold, I have learned that the man who passeth here so often is a holy, divine man. Let us, therefore, fit him up a little chamber in the upper floor, and put into it a bed, a table, a chair, and a candlestick, and when he cometh to us he may lodge there. One day he did return,

[1] There have been, at all times, degenerate and impudent boys, who practised their wantonness and wickedness upon older people; and there are such still, though there are no longer prophets, who could, like Elisha, call down a divine punishment upon the offenders. This incident, however, may serve as a lesson to youth, teaching them, that similar proofs of scorn and contempt, especially towards their seniors, are highly sinful and culpable.

and stopped there over night. And he said to Gehazi, his servant, Call me this Shunamite woman. He called her, and she came. And he said unto his servant, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast taken so much trouble on our account, what could be done for thee? Wouldst thou be spoken for to the king, or to the general of the army? She replied, I dwell among my own people (i. e. I live in peace with my fellow inhabitants, and therefore do not stand in need of any intercession). And Elisha said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Nothing; only she hath no child, and her husband is old. Call her back then, said Elisha; and Gehazi called her, and she placed herself at the door. And Elisha said, This time a year thou shalt embrace a son. The woman replied, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not treat thy servant with a vain hope. Elisha departed. And the woman conceived and bare a son at the very time that Elisha had appointed.

And the child grew up. One day, being in the field with his father among the reapers, he suddenly said to his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him home to his mother. The lad took the boy, and carried him to his mother; and he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. The woman carried him up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him. She then sent word to her husband, saying, Send me, I pray thee, one of thy servants, and a she-ass; I will but run to the man of God, and be back again soon. He asked, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day, it being neither new moon nor sabbath?[1] She replied, All is well. Then she had the ass saddled, and said to her servant, Drive her, and do not stop until I bid you. So she went unto the divine man, to Mount Carmel. And when she was come to the man of God, to the hill, she laid hold of his feet. Gehazi advanced near her to prevent her; but the man of God said, Let her alone, for her soul is much grieved, but the Lord hath concealed the cause from me. Then she said, Did I desire a child of my lord? Did I not rather say, Deceive me not with a false hope?[2] And he said

[1] From this question, it appears, that it was customary, on festivals and on the new moon, to visit the prophets and public teachers, to be instructed and advised by them:—a very useful and proper way of spending the holidays. But, generally, they only visited the prophets on extraordinary occurrences, as appears from her answer, "All is well."

[2] This language, expressive as it is of the most heartfelt grief, requires no further addition, nor any further explanation.

to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, take my staff, and go thy way; if thou meet any man, salute him not, and if any salute thee, answer him not again; and lay my staff upon the face of the child. But the mother of the child said, As the Lord liveth, and as thou livest, I will not leave thee. Elisha arose, and followed her. Gehazi, meanwhile, was gone before them, and had put the staff upon the face of the child; but there was no sign of life. He therefore returned, went to meet his master, and told it him. Elisha entered the room, and, behold, the child still lay dead on his bed. And he shut himself up, and prayed unto the Lord; he then went up on the bed, and laid himself upon the child, so that he lay quite stretched out upon him, and the body of the child became warm. And after Elisha had risen from the bed, and again stretched himself upon the child, the child sneezed, and at length opened his eyes. He now sent for the woman, and said to her, Here, take thy son. The woman fell at his feet, bowed herself to the ground, and took her son and went out. Elisha then returned to Gilgal.

One day, a certain man brought him twenty loaves of barley, and a sack full of ears of corn, of the first-fruits, as a present. Elisha said to his servant, Set it before the people that they may eat. And his servitor said, What! should I set this before a hundred men? But Elisha said, Give it them, for thus saith the Lord, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof: so he set it before them. They did eat, and left thereof, as the Lord had spoken.

Naaman, general of the king of Aram, was in high esteem with his master, for he was a brave warrior. Now this Naaman was leprous. A young maiden of Israel, who had been taken prisoner by the people of Aram, and who waited upon Naaman's wife, said to her mistress, Would God my lord were to apply to the prophet of Samaria, for he would surely cure him of his leprosy. Naaman told this his lord. And the king of Aram said, Go to, go; and I will give thee a letter to the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment. He delivered his letter to the king of Israel; and when the king had read it, he rent his garments, saying, Am I a god, to kill and to make alive, that he sendeth me a leper, to cure him? But mind, he only seeketh a quarrel against me. When Elisha, the man of God, had heard the matter, he sent to the king of Israel, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy garments? Let

him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stopped at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and bathe in Jordan seven times, and thou shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, and said, I thought he would surely come out to me, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and so cure the leper. What! are not the Abana and Pharvar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not bathe in them to become clean? So he went away in a rage. But his servants approached him, and said, Oh, sir, if the prophet had bid thee do a difficult thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he only saith to thee, Bathe, and thou shalt be clean. Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, as the divine man had ordered him to do. And his flesh turned like the flesh of a young lad, and he was quite clean. He now returned with his whole retinue to the divine man, and came and stood before him, and said, Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. I pray thee now, accept a present of thy servant. But Elisha replied, As the Lord liveth, whom I serve, I will accept nothing. Naaman urged him to take it, but he refused. And Naaman said, Then let, I pray thee, as much earth be given to thy servant as two mules can carry;[1] for thy servant will henceforth offer sacrifice unto no other god but to the Lord alone; only in this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the temple of Rimon, to worship there (the idol), and because the king usually leaneth on me, I must also prostrate myself there; the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing. And Elisha replied, Go in peace. When he was gone some distance, Gehazi, the servant of the divine man, said to himself, Behold, my master hath refused to accept anything of Naaman, but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take something of him: so he ran after him. When Naaman saw him running, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and asked him if all was well. And Gehazi replied, All is well; my master only hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now, there are come to me from Mount Ephraim, two young disciples of the prophets; thou shouldst therefore give them a talent of silver, and two changes of garments.

[1] In order to build therewith an altar to the Lord, as an expression of gratitude.

And Naaman replied, Pray take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and ordered two of his servants to carry them before him. And when he came to the hill (upon which Elisha dwelt), he took them out of their hands, and had them laid up in a house, and sent the men back again. But when he came home, and stood before his master, Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no where. I had surely not lost my senses, replied Elisha, when I saw some one lighting from his chariot to meet thee. Was that a time to accept silver; to procure, perhaps, garments, olive-yards, vineyards, sheep, oxen, man-servants, and maid-servants? Now, therefore, the leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy children. And Gehazi went away from him, with a leprosy as white as snow.[1]

The disciples of the prophets said to Elisha, Behold, the place wherein we dwell is too confined for us; let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us build us there a dwelling-house for ourselves. And he answered, Go ye. And one said, Pray, go with us; and he answered, I will go: so he went with them. They came to Jordan, and cut down trees. And one of them let fall his axe into the water; and he cried, and said, Alas, master, for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he showed him the place. And Elisha cut down a stick, and cast it in thither, and the axe emerged to the surface. And he said, Take it up to thee. And he stretched out his hand, and took it.

The army of Aram besieged Samaria. This gave rise to such a great famine, that even mothers devoured their own children. King Ahaziah, hearing of this calamity, was very wroth against the prophet Elisha, so that he threatened to kill him.[2] And when he, attended by his captain, was at Elisha's, he said, This calamity proceedeth from the Lord, what should I hope in him any longer? But Elisha replied, Hear ye the word of

[1] What a horrible vice is covetousness or avarice! Its concomitants are falsehood and fraud. As the punishment which here succeeded it destroys all the wholesome fluids in the body, so covetousness is destructive to the soul, as it admits neither of virtue nor peace.

[2] A similar proceeding to that of his father Ahab, who was exasperated against the prophet Elijah, on the occasion of the want of rain (see above, p. 207). The prophet, he thought, should either avert the calamity, or at least appease the people.

the Lord: to-morrow, about this time, a measure of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria. Then the captain, who always accompanied the king, said to the divine man, If this be possible, the Lord would have to let it rain corn from heaven. And he said, Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. Now the same evening, four men from the city, who were gone into the camp of Aram, brought a message. They said to the porter of the city, We came to the camp of Aram, and behold there was no man to be seen, nor a human voice to be heard, but horses and asses are tied, and the tents still stand as they were. When this intelligence had reached the king, he sent out two horsemen, and they found all as the four men had stated; for the Lord had caused the army of Aram to be seized with consternation, so that they had taken to flight. And the people went out and plundered the whole camp of Aram, and a measure of fine flour was sold for one shekel, according to the word of the Lord, through the divine man. And the king appointed the captain, who was in constant attendance upon him, superintendent of the gate; and the people trode upon him, and he died, as the man of God had predicted, when the king had gone down to him.

Elisha died, and they buried him; and bands of Moabites roamed about the country that year. And it happened one day, as they were interring a man, that they spied a band, and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha; and when he touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood upon his feet.

XVIII. JEHU, KING OF ISRAEL. THE KING JEHORAM AND AHAZIAH, AS WELL AS THE QUEEN JEZEBEL, AND ALL THE POSTERITY OF AHAB ARE PUT TO DEATH BY HIM. EXTERMINATION OF THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

"He who soweth in iniquity shall reap woe; the rod putteth an end to his mischief." Prov. xxii. 8.

JEHORAM, the son of Jehoshaphat, was king over Judah. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab, for the daughter of Ahab, Athaliah, was his wife. After having reigned eight years, he died, and his son, Ahaziah, a son of Athaliah, reigned in his stead. He, too, walked in the evil way of the house of Ahab, to which he was related,

and did that which was displeasing to the Lord. At that time, one of the disciples of the prophets went to Ramoth-Gilead (for the prophet Elisha had bid him do so), and anointed the general Jehu, who sat there with several generals in the chamber, to be king over Israel. The disciple of the prophet, namely, went with Jehu into a private room, poured oil on his head, and said to him, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I herewith anoint thee king over the people Israel. And thou shalt extirpate the family of Ahab; for I will avenge the blood of my faithful prophets, and of all those who honoured me, at the hand of Jezebel; and as for Jezebel herself, the dogs shall eat her in the valley of Jezreel, and she shall not be buried. As soon as Jehu disclosed this occurrence to those that were present, they blew the cornet, and exclaimed, Jehu is king. Jehu immediately departed with some of his adherents, and rode towards Jezreel, where Joram, king of Israel, and Ahaziah, king of Judah, happened to be at that time. The two kings went to meet Jehu, and met him in the field of Naboth, the Jezreelite. When Joram saw Jehu, he called to him, Is it peace? And he answered, What peace, so long as the licentious life of thy mother and her witchcrafts continue? Then Joram turned about to escape, calling to Ahaziah, There is treachery. But Jehu stretched his bow, and shot at Joram, so that the arrow pierced his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot and died. Then said Jehu to his captain, Take him out, and cast him into the field of Naboth; for thus the Lord decreed against him, In the field where the blood of Naboth flowed, shall it be requited to him. Jehu also caused Ahaziah, who had fled, to be pursued; and he was wounded in the chariot, and died soon after at Megiddo. Jehu now went to Jezreel. When Jezebel heard what had happened, she painted her eyebrows black, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered at the gate, she called to him, Is it peace? And he looked up to the window, and said, Who is on my side, who? And forthwith several servants showed themselves at the window. He called unto them, saying, Throw her down. So they threw her down; and her blood was sprinkled on the wall and on the horses. Jehu trod her with his horse under foot, went into a house, and did eat and drink, and then said, Go and look after this cursed woman, and bury her, being a king's daughter. They went, but found no more of her than her skull, and her feet, and hands. When

they reported this to him, he said, Thus was the counsel of the Lord, which he had foretold, through his prophet Elijah, In the district of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel. Also, all the children of Ahab, seventy in number, Jehu caused to be put to death, as well as all his relatives, his priests, and all the prophets and priests of Baal. Thus Jehu, indeed, destroyed the Baal worship in Israel; nevertheless, from the sins of Jeroboam, by which that king had seduced Israel, Jehu desisted not, but likewise worshipped the golden calves in Beth-el and in Dan. After a reign of eight and twenty years, Jehu died. He was buried in Samaria, and his son Jehoahaz succeeded him on the throne.

XIX. THE QUEEN ATHALIAH. CONSPIRACY AGAINST HER BY THE PRIEST JEHOIADAH. JOASH MADE KING. HIS MELANCHOLY FATE AFTER THE DEATH OF JEHOIADAH. AMAZIAH.

"Wickedness, though in the last hand, remaineth not unpunished; the offspring of the righteous shall be delivered." Prov. xi. 21.

When Athaliah,[1] the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she had all the royal offspring put to death. But Jehoseba, sister of Ahaziah, and wife of the priest Jehoiadah, took Joash, the son of Ahaziah, after having stolen him from amidst the murdered royal children, and kept him and his nurse concealed in her bed-chamber from Athaliah. So the young prince was hid in the house of his aunt six years, during which time Athaliah reigned over the country. In the seventh year, Jehoiadah sent for the rulers over hundreds (of the officiating Levites), and for the captains, and the guards, and took them into the temple of the Lord, and made a covenant with them by taking an oath of them, and showed them the royal prince. And he gave them instructions, telling them how they should divide themselves in watches and sentinels in the king's palace and in the temple, that they should (on the appointed day) surround the royal prince, with their weapons in their hands, and cut down every one who should endeavour to come in their ranks. He now gave them the spears and shields which

[1] She was the widow of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. Ahaziah had been slain by Jehu. (See the preceding chapter.)

had been kept in the temple since the time of king David. And when guards had been stationed at every ingress and egress within and without the temple, and every thing was thus prepared, he brought forth the prince, set the crown upon his head, and put the testimony (the royal garment) on him, and anointed him king. All the people clapped their hands joyfully, and exclaimed, God save the king. Athaliah, hearing the noise of the multitude that came running to the spot, went into the temple to the people. But when she beheld the young king standing upon the pillar, and surrounded by captains, and heard the rejoicing of the people, and the sounding of the trumpets, she rent her garment, and exclaimed, Treason, treason. Jehoiadah, the priest, commanded the generals of the army, and said, Let her go forth between the ranks of the guard, but whoever followeth her, cut ye down; for the priest did not wish she should be slain in the house of God. So she went out of the temple into the royal palace, where she was put to death. And Jehoiadah made a covenant between the Lord, the king, and the people, that they should remain the Lord's people, and he also concluded a compact between the king and the people. Hereupon all the people went into the temple of Baal, pulled it down, and broke the images and altars that were therein, and slew Mathan, the priest of Baal, before the altar. Then the king was escorted from the temple into the royal palace, and he took his seat on the royal throne. The whole people rejoiced, and the city was quiet again: so Joash was king, being only seven years of age. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, as long as he enjoyed the instruction and guidance of Jehoiadah the priest. He had the temple repaired, and made various good regulations. Jehoiadah died, being a hundred and thirty years old, and was buried in the royal vaults. Now, after the death of Jehoiadah, Judah again did what was displeasing to the Lord, for they abandoned the temple of the Lord, and went to worship idols. And the spirit of God came upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoiadah; he addressed the people, and said, Thus saith the Lord, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord? Ye will be unsuccessful; for as ye have forsaken the Lord, he will forsake you also. But a conspiracy was formed against him, and, by the orders of king Joash, he was stoned in the court of the temple, and died. And while he was dying, he said, May the Lord look upon it, and require it. Thus

Joash remembered not the kindness which Jehoiadah, the father of Zechariah, had shown him. And when a year had elapsed, the army of the Syrians invaded Jerusalem, destroyed many of the leading men of the people, and plundered the city. With a small company came Aram, and the Lord delivered into their hands the much more numerous army of Judah, because Judah had forsaken the Lord, the God of his fathers. The enemy also inflicted punishments upon Joash. And he was taken seriously ill; his servants formed a conspiracy against him, and slew him on his bed.[1] Thus died Joash, after having reigned forty years. He was buried in the city of David, but not in the sepulchre of the kings. His son Amaziah reigned in his stead. Amaziah did that which was pleasing in the eyes of the Lord; yet, not like David his ancestor, but only like his father Joash. As soon as he saw himself confirmed on the throne, he ordered the servants that had assassinated his father to be put to death; but the children of the murderers he ordered not to be slain, according unto what is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers; but every man shall atone for his own sin only. He also slew the Edomites in the valley of Salt, and took the citadel of Selah; but having also challenged Jehoash, king of Israel, to war, that king sent him back word, saying, Thou hast indeed defeated Edom, preserve now thy glory, and remain at home; wherefore wilt thou plunge into misfortune? Amaziah, however, would not hear; therefore, Jehoash advanced against him, and Judah was defeated. Amaziah himself was taken prisoner at Beth-shemesh. And Jehoash came to Jerusalem, destroyed a great part of the wall of Jerusalem, plundered all the gold and silver, and all the precious vessels out of the temple and the royal palace, took hostages with him, and returned to Samaria. He died soon after, and after his death, Amaziah reigned over Judah fifteen years. Then a conspiracy was formed against him, and he was slain in Jerusalem. And the people made Azariah his son (also called Usiah) king in his stead.

[1] Compare 2 Chron. chap. xxiv. Such was the fate of king Joash, whose reign commenced so auspiciously. He, too, left us an admonishing lesson, teaching us how impiety and shameful ingratitude are punished by the Lord, and how great is the loss of a pious and trusty instructor and guide. Joash was good, *as long as Jehoiadah the priest was alive.*

XX. THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.

"The days of visitation are come, the period of retribution; that Israel shall perceive." Hos. ix. 7.

When *Hosea*, the son of Elah, reigned over Israel in Samaria, *Shalmaneser*, king of Assyria, made war upon him. Hosea submitted to him, and paid him tribute. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not to the degree to which his predecessors went. But the king of Assyria discovered a piece of treachery in Hosea, for he had sent an embassy to So, king of Egypt, to form an alliance with him, and had not paid the annual tribute. And it was in the ninth year of the reign of Hosea, that the king of Assyria took Samaria, after having besieged it three years. And he had the king laid in fetters, and cast into prison; and he carried the people away into Assyria, where he assigned to them cities for their settlements. At the same time he sent for people to come from Assyria, and they took possession of Samaria and of the country. Such was the fate of Israel, because the people had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers, and followed after idols; because they had despised the admonitions of the prophets of the Lord, and slighted their precepts, ever since their first king Jeroboam had broken the sacred covenant, which the Lord had concluded with their ancestors. Therefore the Lord was so angry with Israel, that he rejected them from his presence, and left only the tribe of Judah in the country. Now as the strange nations that had settled in Samaria, and in other cities of the country, did not fear the Lord, the Lord sent lions among them, which destroyed some of them. This having been reported to the king of Assyria, he ordered a priest of the people of Israel, who had been expelled thence, to be sent thither, to teach the people how to serve the Lord. They now indeed worshipped the Lord, but they also at the same time served their idols, so that they were both worshippers of the one God and idolaters. So likewise did their children, and grandchildren, and all their posterity, the *Samaritans*.

XXI. HEZEKIAH. MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE OF JERUSALEM, AND OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH. SENNACHERIB.

"The lips of the righteous preserve many; but fools die for want of wisdom." Prov. x. 21.

At that time, Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, reigned over Judah. He did that which was acceptable to the Lord, like his ancestor David; for he placed full confidence in the Lord, the God of Israel, so that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah. He caused the high places to be removed, the images to be broken, the groves to be cut down, and the brazen serpent, which Moses had made, to be broken to pieces, because the children of Israel had until then offered up incense to it.[1] Thus he departed not from the Lord, and obeyed his commandments, which he commanded Moses. And the Lord was with him, and whatever he undertook prospered. He revolted from the king of Assyria, and refused to obey him. He also defeated the Philistines, and laid waste their dominion. It was in the fourth year of his reign, that Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, took Samaria, and carried away the house of Israel into captivity. And in the fourteenth year of his reign, Sennacherib, king of Assyria (the successor of Shalmaneser), invaded all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them. Then king Hezekiah sent to king Sennacherib, saying, I have offended against thee, leave me now, and I will bear whatever thou shalt impose. And the king of Assyria imposed on him a penalty of three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the temple, and in the royal treasuries. But some time after, Sennacherib sent a numerous army unto Jerusalem, against king Hezekiah, and had the people challenged by heralds to surrender the city, and to revolt from their king. "Let not Hezekiah deceive you any longer," said Rab-shakeh, the deputy, to the people who were standing upon the wall, "for he is not able to deliver you; show yourselves peaceably disposed towards the

[1] See Numbers (p. 88). Thus, that which in its time, being applied to its intended purpose, is good and salutary, may at another time, and under other circumstances, prove injurious and destructive. Moses, by the command of God, made a brazen serpent, in order thereby to heal the Israelites, bodily, from the effects of the poisonous serpents, and to elevate and improve them, mentally. Subsequently, however, by abuse, they converted this remedy into an idolatrous mediator, and offered up sacrifices unto it.

great king of Assyria, and it shall be well with you. He will bring you into a land which resembleth your own; into a land that hath corn and wine, corn-fields and vineyards, a land that produceth olives and the honey of dates; preserve ye, therefore, your lives, and perish ye not." But the people remained silent, and answered him not a word, for thus the king had commanded it. Then Rab-shaketh returned to Sennacherib, and he once more sent ambassadors to Hezekiah, saying, "Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, to say, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all other countries, and how they have laid them waste, and shouldst thou be spared? Were their gods able to save them?" Such were the contents of the letter, which the ambassadors delivered to king Hezekiah. And Hezekiah read it, went up with it into the house of the Lord, and spread it open before the Lord. And he prayed, and said, O Lord God of Israel, thou alone art Lord over all the kingdoms of the world, creator of heaven and earth, incline, O Lord, thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, who hath sent ambassadors to blaspheme thee, O living God. Of a truth, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have destroyed those false gods, because they were the works of men, wood and stone. But thou, O Lord our God, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou alone, O Lord, art the true God. Then Isaiah, the prophet, sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Thy prayer regarding the king of Assyria I have heard. The king of Assyria shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor appear before thee with a shield, nor raise a bulwark against thee; by the way that he came shall he return, and not put his foot into this city. I will protect this city, for my sake, and for my servant David's sake. And it came to pass that night, that an angel of the Lord went forth, and slew in the camp of the Assyrians, a hundred and eighty-five thousand men. When they arose in the morning, the field was full of corpses. So Sennacherib departed, and returned to Nineveh. And one day, as he was worshipping in the temple of an idol, he was there slain by his sons.

In those days Hezekiah became sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah came to him, and said to him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die. Then

Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is acceptable to thee: at the same time he wept bitterly. Thereupon the word of the Lord came to Isaiah, saying, Go back, and tell Hezekiah, the ruler of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears. Behold, I will heal thee; within three days thou shalt go up into the temple. I will also add unto thy life fifteen years, and deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and protect this city, for my own sake, and for the sake of my servant David. Isaiah now ordered a poultice of figs to be laid on the boil, whereupon Hezekiah recovered. At that time, Berodach Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters of congratulation and presents unto Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been ill. Hezekiah paid the deputies much attention, and showed them the treasury, the silver and gold, the spices and the precious balm, the arsenal, and whatever else was remarkable amongst his treasures; in short, there was nothing either in his palace, or in the whole kingdom, that Hezekiah showed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet, unto Hezekiah, and asked him, What said these men, and whence came they? Hezekiah replied, They are come from a distant country, from Babylon. And the former said, What have they seen in thy house? All that is in it, rejoined Hezekiah, there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear, then, the word of the Lord: Behold, days shall come, when all that is in thy house, and that which thy fathers have hitherto amassed, shall be carried away into Babylon; nothing shall be left of it, saith the Lord. And of thy offspring after thee, shall they also carry away, and they shall be courtiers in the palace of the king of Babylon.[1] Then said Hezekiah unto

[1] Hezekiah, pious, and God-fearing, was yet vain and ostentatious; and the Lord forthwith sent Isaiah to reproach him with his folly, and to announce its evil consequences. May this again prove a lesson to us, that we may never boast of, and pride ourselves in, the abundance with which the Lord may have blessed us. On the contrary, let us ever consider, that the Almighty, who hath bestowed happiness and wealth, may also soon, very soon, deprive us of those blessings. How many are poor to-day that were rich yesterday! "The Lord's is the earth, and all that filleth it; the world and its inhabitants are his." Let us, in quiet humility, rejoice in the blessings of God; and, acknowledging his great

Isaiah, The sentence of the Lord, which thou announcest, is yet merciful, for at least, in my days, peace and truth shall prevail. After having reigned nine and twenty years, Hezekiah departed this life, to be with his fathers, and his son Manasseh reigned in his stead.

XXII. MANASSEH. HIS REPENTANCE, PENITENCE, AND AMENDMENT. THE PIOUS KING JOSIAH. THE PROPHETESS HULDAH.

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call on him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the sinful his evil devices; let him return unto the Lord, he will have compassion upon him; unto our God, who is so ready to forgive." Isa. lv. 6, 7.

MANESSEH did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and sinned more than all the kings of Israel; for he even placed an idol of the grove into the temple of the Lord. And he also seduced the house of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that they did evil, and obeyed not the commandments and the precepts of the Lord. The Lord charged his servants, the prophets, to warn Manasseh and his people, but they heeded not the warning. Then the Lord caused an Assyrian army to come up against them; and they took Manasseh prisoner, bound him with fetters, and conveyed him to Babylon. And when he was in great distress in his captivity, he humbled himself before the Lord, the God of his fathers; and he repented of his evil ways, and prayed unto the Lord, with all his heart. And the Lord heard his prayer, and reinstated him on his throne in Jerusalem. Then Manasseh knew and acknowledged that the Lord was the true God. And he improved the fortification of the city of David, and of other towns; removed the strange gods from the temple, as well as all the altars of the idols in Jerusalem; re-erected the altar of the Lord, and caused offerings of thanksgiving and rejoicing to be brought. He also exhorted the people in Judah to serve the Lord.[1] After having reigned fifty-five years, Manasseh died, and Ammon, his son, reigned in his stead. His servants conspired against him, and slew him, and his son Josiah succeeded him in the government. And Josiah did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked entirely in the

mercy, let us unremittingly endeavour to evince our gratitude by performing his holy will.

[1] This passage is taken from 2 Chron. chap. xxxiii.

way of David his ancestor, and departed not therefrom. And it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of his reign, as he was giving instructions relative to the repair of the temple, that Shaphan, the accountant, who came to present his report concerning the money collected for the repairs, brought him a roll of the law, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me this roll. And he read from it to the king. And when the king heard the words contained in this book of the law, he rent his garments; and he commanded the high priest, and several officers, saying, Go ye, inquire of the Lord for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found; for surely the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us is very great, because our fathers have not heeded the words of this book, and have not done what is prescribed to us therein.[1] So Hilkiah the priest, together with the other officers, went unto *Huldah*, the prophetess, who dwelt in Jerusalem, and communed with her. And the prophetess replied, and said, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, the Lord saith, Behold, I decree evil against this place, and against its inhabitants, as it is written in the book from which the king of Judah hath read. Because they have forsaken me, and have sacrificed unto other gods, and provoked me to anger with all their actions; therefore my wrath hath been kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. But to the king of Judah, who sent you to me, thus shall ye say to him, Because thy heart was softened, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest the punishment which I have decreed against this place and its inhabitants; because thou hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me, therefore I have heard thee, saith the Lord. Behold, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be put in thy grave in peace, and not see the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they reported this answer to the king. Hereupon the king sent, and had all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem gathered unto him. And he went up with them, with both small and great, into the temple of the Lord, and there read to them all the

[1] During the long reign of Manasseh and Ammon the law of God was neglected, and consequently was not read on the occasion of public assemblies. Hence the surprise at its re-appearance. King Josiah, who was still very young and inexperienced in the law, now heard the divine precepts of the law of Moses, and the denunciations against the transgression of the divine commandments, but especially against idolatry; no wonder, therefore, that he, being truly pious, was startled, and dreaded the wrath of the Lord.

contents of the book of the covenant, which was found in the temple. The king stood on a platform, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after him, to observe his commandments and his statutes, with all their heart, and all their soul, and to perform all the words of the covenant, which are inscribed in this book: and all the people stood to the covenant (i. e. joined it). He then removed all the high places for offerings, all the altars, groves, and priests of the idols, and thus purified the temple, the city, and the whole country from idolatry. And he commanded the people, saying, Celebrate the passover in honour of the Lord your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant: so they celebrated the festival of passover in Jerusalem. And such a passover had not been celebrated from the days of the judges, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and of Judah. Josiah, moreover, removed all the wizards and workers with familiar spirits, as well as all the tutelar deities and other abominations, that had till then been seen in Judea and in Jerusalem, and over all the country. Before him there was no king who so walked after the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, quite according to the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any one like him. In his time, Necho, king of Egypt, went to make war upon the king of Assyria. And king Josiah went to oppose him, and was killed by an archer in a battle at Megiddo. His attendants conveyed his corpse in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in the royal sepulchre, by the side of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for the death of Josiah, and the prophet Jeremiah composed an elegy to his memory. His reign had lasted one and thirty years. He was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz.

XXIII. DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND OF THE TEMPLE BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR. BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY. DEATH OF GEDALIAH.

"Be not wroth, O Lord, so exceedingly, neither remember iniquity for ever. Behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Thy holy cities are become a wilderness, Zion is become a desert, Jerusalem a desolation." Isa. lxiv. 9, 10.

JEHOAHAZ did what was displeasing to the Lord, but he reigned only three years; for Pharaoh-necho took him away with him captive into Egypt, where he died, and he placed his

brother Jehoiakim on the throne. He, too, did evil like his brother. After his death, he was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin, who likewise did what was displeasing to the Lord. After having reigned three months, Nebuchadnezzar came with an army, and laid siege to the city. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, together with his mother, his ministers of state, and his principal courtiers. He also had all the treasures out of the temple, and out of the royal palace, carried away; and all the golden vessels, which Solomon had caused to be made, he ordered to be broken to pieces. In like manner, he drove out the principal inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the country, and all the able warriors, and conveyed them captive into Babylon. And Nebuchadnezzar appointed Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, king in his stead. Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years. But he also did what was displeasing to the Lord, as Jehoiachin had done; because the Lord was angry with Judah and Jerusalem, and wished to reject them from his presence, it came to pass, that Zedekiah revolted from the king of Babylon. Jeremiah, the prophet, indeed, admonished the king and the people to be faithful to the covenant, and predicted the approaching calamity, but they hearkened not unto him.

And it came to pass, in the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, on the tenth day of the tenth month,[1] that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came with his whole army against Jerusalem, laid siege to it, and had forts built round about it. The siege lasted two years, whereby the famine increased to that degree, that mothers devoured their own children, and men fell down dead in the streets.[2] On the ninth day of the fourth month,[3] the enemy penetrated into the city. King Zedekiah fled with his army; the Babylonians pursued him, and overtook him in the plain of Jericho. Here they took Zedekiah prisoner, after having dispersed his men, and conducted him to the king of Babylon, to Riblah, where sentence was passed upon him. According to that sentence his children were

[1] This is commemorated by the annual general fast on the tenth of Tebeth (עֲשָׂרָה בְּטֵבֵת).

[2] See the Lamentations of Jeremiah.

[3] The fast in commemoration of this event has been fixed on the seventeenth of the fourth month (שִׁבְעָה עָשָׂר בְּתַמּוּז), because on that day, Jerusalem, in the time of the second temple, was taken by the Romans, and because the nation suffered several other calamities that day.

executed before his eyes, and as for the king himself, his eyes were put out, he was bound with fetters, and carried away captive to Babylon. Soon after, on the seventh of the fifth month,[1] of the same year, Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard of Nebuchadnezzar, came up to Jerusalem. And Nebuzar-adan burnt the temple, the royal palace, and all the principal edifices in Jerusalem, and had the walls of the city razed. And he carried away the inhabitants of the city to Babylon, into captivity, and left only some of the lower class of the people, to cultivate the ground and the vineyards. All the gold, silver, and brass vessels of the temple, as well as the two large pillars of brass before the temple, all this Nebuzar-adan had carried away to Babylon. And he took Seraiah, the chief priest, together with several officers, and sixty of the people of the country, who happened to be in Jerusalem, and took them and brought them to the king of Babylon, to Riblah, where they were executed. As for the people that remained in the country, he appointed over them *Gedaliah*, the son of Ahikam. In the seventh month, a certain Ishmael, a descendant of the royal family, came with ten other men, and slew Gedaliah,[2] together with all the Jews and Chaldees who were with him at Mizpah.

And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, that Evil-merodach, king of Babylon, on his accession to the throne, took Jehoiachin out of prison, spoke kindly to him, and gave him the first rank among the kings, who were with him in Babylon. Jehoiachin now changed his garments, which he had worn in prison, and put on a more becoming dress, and dined at the royal table all his life. At the same time, a permanent allowance was made him by the king, for his daily expenditure, and he enjoyed this allowance all the days of his life.

[1] Of the month of Ab. In Jeremiah, chap. lii. we read, "On the tenth of the fifth month," &c. The ninth (the day of general fast and mourning תִּשְׁעָה בְּאָב), however, is considered as the principal day. The second temple and the city of Jerusalem were on that day destroyed a second time by the Romans (3830 A.M.) which event caused the dissolution of the Jewish polity. Besides this, the ninth day is marked by various other unfortunate occurrences in the annals of the Jewish nation.

[2] This incident gave rise to the fast on the third of Tishri (צוֹם גְּדַלְיָהוּ).

The names of the kings, since the division of the kingdom, were the kings of

JUDAH		and	ISRAEL.	
Rehoboam	Jotham		Jeroboam	Jehoahaz
Abiah	Ahaz		Nadab	Jehoash
Asha	Hezekiah		Basha	Jeroboam II.
Jehoshaphat	Manasse		Elah	Zechariah
Joram	Amon		Simri	Shalum
Ahaziah	Josiah		Omri	Menahem
Athaliah	Jehoahaz		Ahab	Pekahia
Joash	Jehoiakim		Ahaziah	Pekah
Amaziah	Jehoiachin		Joram	Hoshea.
Usiah	Zedekiah		Jehu	

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

סֵפֶר יְשַׁעְיָהוּ

I. ISAIAH COMPLAINS OF THE UNGODLINESS AND MORAL CORRUPTION OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.

THE Vision which Isaiah, the son of Amos, saw (that is, the prophecy which he announced) concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the reigns of the kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Hear, O heavens; give ear, O earth:
For the Lord saith,
I have brought up children, and exalted them,
And they have rebelled against me.
The ox knoweth his owner,
The ass his master's crib;
But Israel knoweth me not,
My people hath no such knowledge.
Ah, sinful nation, people full of iniquity;
Brood of evil-doers, degenerate children!
They have forsaken the Lord;
Provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel:
They have receded from him.
Wherefore should ye be stricken any more,

If ye revolt more and more?
Behold, the whole head is sick,
And the whole heart afflicted;
From the sole of the foot unto the head, nothing is sound;
All is full of wounds, bruises, and boils,
Without being closed or bound up,
Or lenified by oil.
Your country is desolate,
Your cities consumed by fire,
Your acres; enemies devour them in your presence:
All is laid waste, like after a hostile invasion.
The daughter of Zion alone is left,[1]
Like a bower in a vineyard;
Like a keeper's lodge in a gourd-field;
Like a desolate city.
Had not the Lord Zebaoth
Left us this small refuge,
We should be like unto Sodom, like unto Gomorrah.
Hear the words of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom.
Listen to the precept of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.
What mean the multitude of your sacrifices? saith the Lord.
I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams,
And of the fat of fed beasts;
In the blood of bullocks, lambs, and he-goats,
I delight not.
Wherefore come ye to appear before me?
Who requireth of you to tread my courts?
Bring me no more deceitful offerings;
Their odour is an abomination unto me.
New moon, sabbath, and festive proclamation,
I cannot bear them:
Iniquity, and solemn assembly.
Your new moons, your festivals, are hateful to me;
Yea, they are a burden to me;
I am weary to bear them.
Though ye spread forth your hands,
Mine eye turneth away from them;

[1] That is, Jerusalem, being the capital of the house of Judah (the house of Israel was already dissolved). Zion was the name of the hill upon which stood the southern upper part of the city, and the royal mansion. Hence, by that name, the prophets designate now the city, now the temple, and now even the entire nation.

Though ye add prayer unto prayer,
I hear it not;
Your hands are full of blood.
Wash, purify yourselves;
Remove your evil doings from before mine eyes;
Cease to act wickedly,
Learn to do well;
Seek justice,
Relieve the oppressed;
Vindicate the right of the orphan,
Plead the cause of the widow.
Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord:
Shall your sins, being red as scarlet, appear white as snow?
Shall they, red as crimson, become white as wool?
Obey ye willingly,
And ye shall enjoy the good of the land;
But if ye refuse and rebel, the sword shall consume:
Thus saith the Lord.
Alas, she hath deserted me:
The city, formerly so faithful,
Formerly replete with justice and righteousness;
But now murderers inhabit her.
Thy silver is become dross,
Thy wine mixed with water;
Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves;
Every one loveth bribes, and hunteth after rewards;
No one judgeth the fatherless,
The cause of the widow is not heard:
Therefore, so saith the Lord,
God Zebaoth, Israel's protection:
Ah, I will demand satisfaction of my adversaries,
And avenge me of mine enemies.
My hand shall pass over thee,
Cleanse thee from thy dross,
And remove all thy tin.
And I will restore thy judges as formerly,
And thy counsellors as of old;
Then shalt thou again be called,
City of righteousness, citadel of truth.
Yea, Zion shall be redeemed by practising justice;
And by exercising virtue shall her captives return:
But destroyed together shall be transgressor and sinner,

And consumed they who forsake the Lord.
Then shall ye blush at your groves of pleasure,
And be ashamed of the gardens ye have chosen ;[1]
For ye shall resemble leafless oaks,
And be like gardens wanting water.
Your tutelar deities shall be as tow,
They who form them like sparks of fire ;
Both blaze, none can quench them.

II. CONSOLATION FOR THE FUTURE. ISAIAH IS DISPLEASED WITH THE GREAT AMONG THE PEOPLE, AND REBUKES THEM FOR THEIR INJUSTICE. MISCHIEVOUS CONSEQUENCES OF THE DESIRE FOR FINERY AMONG THE DAUGHTERS OF ZION.

In days hereafter, the mountain of the Lord's temple
Shall be established on the summit of the mountains,
And exalted above your hills,
And all nations shall flow unto it.
Many nations shall flock thither :
Come, say they, let us ascend the mountain of God,
Let us go into the house of the God of Jacob ;
That he may teach us his ways, that we may walk in his paths ;
For from Zion proceedeth the law,
And the word of God from Jerusalem.
He shall judge among the nations,
And shall rebuke the multitude of people ;
And they shall convert their swords into ploughshares,
And their spears into pruning-hooks ;
And nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.
Come, house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord.
Say ye to the righteous,
It shall be well with them ;
They shall enjoy the fruit of their works :
But woe and misery unto the wicked ;
What he doth shall be requited him.
Children are the oppressors of my people,
And women rule over it.
And they, O my people, who should lead thee, mislead thee,

[1] For idolatry and voluptuousness.

Barring the way which thou shouldst go.
But the Lord riseth and judgeth,
Standeth up to judge nations.
The Lord entereth into judgment,
With the elders and princes of his people.
"Ye," he saith, "have gleaned the vineyard,
And filled your houses with the property of the poor.
How can ye thus oppress my people,
And grind the faces of the poor?
Thus saith the Lord, the God of worlds." [haughty,
Moreover, the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are
And walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes,
And trip nicely as they go, making a tinkling with their feet:
Therefore the Lord will strike with baldness the heads of
And expose their charms. [the daughters of Zion,
In that day the Lord will remove the ornaments,
Their foot-chains, cauls, crescents; their smelling-boxes,
bracelets, and veils; [earrings;
Their head-gear, knee-clasps, head-bands, neck-shawls, and
Their rings and nose-jewels;
Their state robes, mantles, wimples, and crisping-pins;
Their fine linen, diadems, and long veils.
And instead of fragrance there shall be foul exhalation;
Instead of the girdles, stripes; and instead of well-dressed
hair, baldness; [instead of beauty.
Instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth; and brands
Thy young men shall fall by the sword,
And thy heroes perish in the battle.
Then shall her (Zion's) gates lament and mourn,
And she, depopulated, shall sit dejected to the ground.

III. THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

Now will I sing to my well-beloved,
A song about his vineyard to my friend.
My well-beloved had a vineyard;
He had it on a fertile hill.
And he fenced it, and cleared away the stones;
And planted it with the choicest vine;
And erected a tower in the midst of it;
And also made a wine-press therein.

Then he hoped it should produce grapes,
But it brought forth wild grapes.
And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah,
Judge ye between me and my vineyard.
What more could I have done to my vineyard,
That I have not already done to it?
Wherefore, while I hoped for grapes,
Brought it forth wild grapes?
Come, now, I will tell you,
What I will do to my vineyard:
I will destroy the hedge thereof,
That it shall be eaten up;
I will break down its walls,
That it shall be trodden down;
I will lay it waste;
It shall not be pruned nor weeded;
Briars only and thorns shall come up;
I will also command the clouds not to rain upon it:
But the vineyard of the Lord Zebaoth is Israel,
And the inhabitants of Judah are his favourite plant.
He looked for justice, but behold iniquity;
For righteousness, but the oppressed raise a loud cry.

IV. THE BLISSFUL CONSEQUENCES OF VIRTUE AND JUSTICE. PREDICTION OF HAPPY TIMES.

Ye nations that are far off, hear my deeds (saith the Lord);
And ye that are near, acknowledge my might.
The sinners in Zion are afraid, the hypocrites tremble.
Who among us, they said, can bear the devouring flame?
Who can suffer the everlasting fire?
He who walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly;
He that despiseth infamous gain,
And withdraweth his hands from bribes;
He who stoppeth his ears, not to hear the bloody design;
He that shutteth his eyes from seeing evil:
He shall dwell on high,
Protected in a munition of rocks;
His bread shall be given him,
His water shall be sure to him.

Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty ;[1]
They shall behold the land that is far off.
Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities :
Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem ;
A peaceable habitation, an immoveable tent ;
Whose stakes shall never be removed,
And whose cords shall never be broken.
Let the desert and the sterile land be glad ;
Let the desolate place rejoice,
And blossom as the rose.[2]
Let it blossom, rejoice, and exult ;
The glory of Lebanon shall be bestowed on it,
The excellency of Carmel and Sharon ;
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
The majesty of our God.
Strengthen ye the weak hands,
And confirm the feeble knees.
Say to the heartless, Be strong, fear not.
Behold, your God cometh with vengeance ;
He cometh with retribution, and will save you.
Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened,
And the ears of the deaf unstopped ;
Then shall the lame man leap as a hart,
And the tongue of the dumb sing with joy :
For in the wilderness shall water break out,
And streams flow in the desert :
And the parched ground shall become a lake,
And the thirsty land springs of water : [couch,
The habitation of wild animals shall become a shepherd's
And the grass grow up to reeds and rushes.
Then shall there be a beaten path,
And it shall be called the holy path ;
The unclean shall not pass over it:
It shall be for them (Israel) a passable way ;
Even the inexperienced shall not err therein.
No lion shall be there ; no ravenous beast shall tread it,
Nor be found there :
The redeemed alone shall walk there.
They whom the Lord delivered shall return,

[1] In the life hereafter, of eternal felicity.
[2] At the time of the deliverance and redemption, when nature shall join, as it were, in the celebration of the happy time.

And come to Zion with songs,
Their heads being crowned with everlasting joy:
Joy and gladness shall accompany them,
And grief and anguish flee away.

V. CONSOLATION. SONG OF PRAISE IN HONOUR OF THE MAJESTY, WISDOM, OMNIPOTENCE, AND JUSTICE OF GOD. PERFECTION AND REWARD OF VIRTUE.

Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God.
Comfort ye the heart of Jerusalem;
Tell her the time of her sufferings is at an end,
Her iniquity is pardoned:
For she hath suffered greatly at the hand of the Lord,
Because of her transgressions. [Lord,
A voice crieth, "In the wilderness prepare ye the way of the
And make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Let every valley be raised, and let mountain and hill sink low;
Let the crooked path become straight,
And steep heights plain:
The majesty of God shall be revealed:
And all mortals shall know,
That this is what the Lord hath spoken."
"Prophesy," saith the voice.
I said, "To whom shall I prophesy?
Behold, all flesh is perishable as grass;
All its grace like the flower of the field.
The grass withereth, the flower fadeth,
When the spirit of God bloweth upon it:
Surely, the people is perishable grass."
The grass withereth, the flower fadeth;
But the word of our God endureth for ever.
Climb up high mountains,
O thou that bringest good tidings unto Zion.
Lift up thy voice with strength,
Thou that predictest salvation unto Jerusalem.
Lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah,
Behold your God;
Behold, the Lord God cometh with omnipotence,
And his arm shall rule for him:
With him is great reward,

And recompense before him."
He feedeth his flock like a shepherd,
His arm embraces the lambs,
He carrieth them in his bosom,
And leadeth gently the sucklings.
Who measureth the waters in the hollow of his hand?
Who meteth out the heavens with a span,
And comprehendeth the dust of the earth in a measure?
Who weigheth the mountains, who the hills,
In the scales of a just balance?
Who directeth the spirit of the Lord?
Who traceth his designs for him?
With whom doth he consult, that he shall instruct him,
That he teach him to choose what is right,
That he impart to him knowledge,
And show him the way of wisdom?
To him the nations are as a drop in the bucket,
As an atom in the balance;
He lifteth up the isles like small dust,
The wood of Lebanon sufficeth not for the fire on the altar,
Nor the beast thereof for burnt offerings.
All nations vanish before him like naught:
Compared to him, how insignificant are they.
To whom, then, will ye liken God?
What will ye compare unto him as resembling him?
Is it that image which the artist casteth,
And which the goldsmith spreadeth over with gold,
And then adorneth with silver chains?
Or the oblation of that poor man,
Who chooseth a tree that is not worm-eaten;
Then goeth and seeketh an artificer,
To make him an imperishable image of it?
Know ye not, and do ye not understand?
Hath it not been told you from the beginning?
Have ye not comprehended the foundation of the earth?
He, who resideth above the earth's orb,
And before whom its inhabitants resemble grasshoppers;
He it is that reduceth princes to nothing,
And the mighty of the earth to vanity:
That their stock extend not,
That it yield no seed, and take no root;
When he bloweth upon them, they wither,

And a storm carrieth them away as stubble.
To whom, then, will ye liken me?
Or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.
Lift up your eyes towards heaven:
Behold, who hath created these things?
He, that bringeth out their host by number,
He calleth them all by name.
By his great strength and great might,
Not one of them faileth.
Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel,
My way is hid from the Lord,
And my right escapeth the sight of my God?
Knowest thou not, hast thou not heard,
That the God of worlds, the Lord,
The Creator of the ends of the earth never fainteth,
Is never weary, and that his wisdom is inscrutable?
He giveth power to the weary,
And new strength to the feeble;
Youths grow faint and weary,
And young men stumble and fall:
But they that confide in the Lord renew their strength,
They ascend with wings as eagles,
They run and are not weary,
They walk and faint not.

VI. THE PROPHET, IN AN EDIFYING MANNER, POINTS TO THE ANCESTORS OF ISRAEL. RETURN TO GOD, AND CONFIDENCE IN HIM. DIGNITY OF THE SABBATH.

Hearken to me, ye that pursue righteousness and seek the Lord:
Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn,
And to the well whence ye are dug.
Look unto Abraham, your progenitor,
And unto Sarah, that bore you:
He was single when I called him,
I blessed him, and made him numerous.
Thus also the Lord will comfort Zion:
He will comfort all her ruins,
He will make her wilderness like Eden,
And her solitary places like the garden of the Lord;
Joy and gladness shall be found therein,

Thanksgiving and the voice of praise.
Seek ye the Lord while he may be found,
Call ye upon him while he is near.
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the sinful man his bad devices:
Let him return unto the Lord,
And he will have mercy upon him:
Let him turn to our God, who repeatedly forgiveth.
For my thoughts are not yours,
Neither are your ways mine, saith the Lord.
High as are the heavens above the earth,
So are my ways elevated above yours,
And my thoughts above your thoughts.
As the rain descendeth from heaven, and the snow,
And never returneth thither, [and bud,
But that it hath watered the earth, and made it bring forth
That it may give seed to the sower, and food for eating,
So also is the word that goeth forth out of my mouth:
It never returneth unto me void;
But it accomplisheth what I determine on,
And performeth successfully that for which I send it.
Now ye shall go out with joy,
And be led forth with peace: [singing,
The mountains and the hills shall break out before you into
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
Instead of thorns shall come up cedars,
Instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;
To the high glory of the Lord,
As an everlasting, imperishable monument.
Thus saith the Lord:
Persist in what is right, and practise virtue,
For my salvation is approaching,
My mercy shall soon be revealed;
Happy the mortal that practiseth it,
Happy the son of man who layeth hold on it,
That observeth the sabbath, and desecrateth it not,
And keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

VII. CORESH (CYRUS, KING OF THE PERSIANS) IS CHOSEN TO HAVE GREAT DOMINION, AND TO REDEEM ISRAEL.

God is omnipotent, one and alone, and no mortal is able to penetrate his mysterious counsels.

THUS saith the Lord to his anointed:
To Cyrus,[1] whose right hand I seize,
That he shall rule over nations;
I will enfeeble kings,
That gates shall be opened before him,
And none remain shut.
Yea, I will go before thee,
And make crooked places straight for thee;
I will break gates of brass,
And cut asunder bars of iron;
And I will give thee secret treasures, concealed riches,
That thou mayest know,
That it is I, the Lord,
Who call thee by thy name:
I, the God of Israel,
For Jacob, my servant's sake,
For the sake of Israel, my chosen one,
I call thee by thy name, appoint thee,
For as for thee, thou knowest me not.
I, the Lord, and no God besides me,
I strengthen thee, yet thou knowest me not.
That it may be known from the rising of the sun unto its setting,
That there is nothing without me,
I, the Lord, and none else,
I form the light, and create darkness,
I make peace, and create evil,[2]
I, the Lord, accomplish all this.
Drop down, ye heavens, from above:
Ye clouds, pour down righteousness:
Let the earth open:
Let salvation bud forth:
Let righteousness spring up:

[1] See below, in the Book of Ezra.

[2] Even the evils on earth, directed by an all-wise Providence, serve as instruments of good for the general end of the order of things in this world. "A partial evil is a universal good."

I, the Lord, have created it.
Woe unto him, that would strive with his maker;
Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth.[1]
Can the clay say to the potter, "What makest thou?
Thy work is shapeless."
Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, his preserver:
Ye ask me of things to come concerning my sons?
And concerning the work of my hands, ye will command me;
I, who have created the earth, and man upon it,
Who by my hands have stretched out the heavens,
And who command all their host,
I encourage him[2] in righteousness,
I will direct all his ways:
He shall rebuild my city,
And set free my captives,
Not by ransom, nor by bribe, saith the Lord of hosts.

VIII. PROPER REPENTANCE, AND A SINCERE AND TRUE REFORMATION, ARE ACCEPTABLE TO THE LORD. CONSOLATION FOR THE CONTRITE SINNERS. TRUE SANCTIFICATION, AND ESSENTIAL OBJECT OF THE SABBATH AND THE FESTIVALS.

Strike a path, strike a path, prepare the way,
Remove every impediment from my people's path;
For thus saith the high and lofty One,
Everlasting and Holy One is his name:
I dwell in the high and holy place,
But also with him that is of a contrite and dejected spirit;
I revive those who are of dejected mind, revive those who
are of a contrite heart. [time,
I do not contend for ever, nor am I wroth for everlasting
If the spirit and soul which I have made are wrapt in grief.
For the punishment of his wicked deeds, I was wroth,
Afflicted him sore, hid my face, and was wroth:
For he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.
But I see him return with repentant heart;
Now I will heal and guide him, [with him.
And restore comfort unto him, and to those who mourned
"Peace," issueth from the Creator's lips,

[1] That is, man with man, but the ways of God are concealed from the human eye.
[2] That is, Koresh.

" Peace," to him that is far off, and to him that is near :
I have healed him, saith the Lord.
But the wicked are like the agitated sea,
That cannot rest,
Its waves ever cast up mire and dirt.
" There is no peace," saith my God, to the wicked.
Proclaim it with a loud voice, cease not ;
Let thy voice sound like a trumpet,
And show my people their transgressions,
And the house of Jacob their sins.
They indeed seek me, day after day,
And delight to know my ways,
Like a nation that practiseth virtue,
And forsaketh not the precepts of its God :
They ask of me the ordinances of justice,
And eagerly desire the friendship of God.
" Ah, wherefore do we fast? thou seest it not ;
We afflict our bodies, thou heedest it not."
Truly, ye delight in your fasting,
Ye suppress all your remorse.
Of a truth, ye fast only for strife and contention,
And to oppress with the fist of malice :
Ye do not fast, that your prayer may be heard in heaven.
What, shall such penitence be acceptable to me ?
A day when man afflicteth his body,
When his head shaketh as a bulrush,
And sackcloth and ashes envelop it ?
Will ye call this penitence,
A day acceptable unto the Lord ?
No, but this is penitence in which I delight :
To loose the bands of wickedness,
To deliver from the heavy burden,
To liberate those that are bound,
And to free the shoulder from every yoke.
O, break thy bread for the hungry,
Open thy door to the afflicted poor ;
If thou see him naked, clothe him,
And withdraw not thyself from thine own flesh.
Then shall thy light break forth like the morning,
And recovery quickly spring up for thy soul ;
Then shall thy righteousness go before thee,
And the majesty of the Lord shall be thy rereward.

Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer,
Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, "Here I am."
If thou remove from amidst thee all oppression,
The putting forth of the finger,
Slanderous speech:
If thy soul willingly refresh the hungry,
And comfort the languishing spirit,
Then shall thy light rise in obscurity,
And thy darkness become as the noon-day:
Then the Lord himself shall ever guide thee,
Nourish thy soul with felicity,
And renew thy strength:
Then shalt thou be like a well watered garden,
Like fresh springs of water whose streams fail not:
Then shall through thee be rebuilt the desolate places of the [past,
With sure foundation for the future.
Restorer, shall posterity call thee,
Restorer of paths to dwell in.
If thy feet rest on the Sabbath,
If your pursuits cease on my holy day,
If thou call the Sabbath a delight of the soul,
Quite consecrated to the sanctity of God:
If thou honourest it by rest from business;
If the soul abandoneth idle wishes,
And the mouth discontinueth vain talk,
Then shalt thou delight in the Lord;
And I will elevate thee above all the heights of this earth,
And thou shalt enjoy the entire heritage of Jacob, thy father:
Thus speaketh the mouth of the Lord.

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH.

סֵפֶר יִרְמְיָהוּ

I. JEREMIAH'S HIGH DESTINY. EXHORTATION TO THE PEOPLE ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR DEGENERACY, AND PROMISE OF THE DIVINE GRACE IN CASE OF A REFORMATION.

THE words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth, in the land Benjamin; to whom the word of the Lord came in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah; and subsequently in the days of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah, namely, unto the destruction of Jerusalem in the fifth month. Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee, thou was chosen by me; and before thou camest into the world, I consecrated thee, and I ordained thee a prophet of the nation. Then I said, Ah, Lord God, behold, I am as yet too young, and not capable to speak in public. But the Lord replied unto me, Say not, I am as yet too young; but go whither I send thee, and speak whatsoever I command thee. Fear no one, I am with thee, and protect thee, saith the Lord. And his hand touched my mouth, and he continued and said, Behold, I have hereby put my words into thy mouth. Henceforth thou art appointed by me over nations and over kingdoms, thou canst root out, pull down, destroy and overthrow, build up and plant.[1]

The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord was this. Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there these words, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye inhabitants of Judah that enter these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of the universe, the God of Israel, Amend your ways, your works, and I will allow you to continue dwelling in this place. Trust ye not in those lying words, namely, Here is the temple of the Lord, here is the palace of the Lord,

[1] That is, all thy prophecies shall come to pass.

here is the residence of the Lord. But amend ye your ways and your doings. Exercise justice one towards another; oppress ye no more the stranger, the orphan, and the widow; shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk ye after other gods, to your shame. Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever. O, that I had in the wilderness a lodging place, I would leave my people, and go from them; for they are all voluptuaries, a band of treacherous men. Their tongue is a bow, ever bent for lies; they do not employ their power in the land for honesty and truth, but they reel from one vice to another, and refuse to know me, saith the Lord. Let every one beware of his bosom friend, let no one any more trust his brother; for every brother deceiveth, every friend slandereth. They mock one another, and speak not the truth; they practise their tongues in speaking falsehoods, and are intent on injustice. Thou dwellest in the midst of deceit, through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord. Verily, thus saith the Lord of the universe, I will melt them, and try them; for what shall I do, it being my people? But their tongue is a sharpened arrow, their speech is pure deceit; with the mouth they speak peaceably to their neighbour, and in the heart the snare is laid. Should I not punish such doing, saith the Lord, should I not be avenged on such a nation? For those mountains I will raise a weeping and wailing, and for those desolate plains, in which no wanderer setteth his foot any more, will I raise lamentations; the lowing of the herd is heard no longer, all is scared away, both the fowl of the air and the beast are fled. And I will turn Jerusalem into a heap of stones, into a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, for want of inhabitants. Who is the wise man that understandeth it, or to whom the mouth of the Lord hath spoken? Let him declare it, for what the land perisheth, is destroyed, is like a wilderness, where none passeth through? And the Lord answered, Because they have forsaken my law, which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; but have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after idols, which their fathers taught them. Therefore, thus saith the Lord of the universe, the God of Israel, Behold, I will feed this people with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink; I will scatter them among nations whom neither they nor their fathers have known, and I will

send a sword after them, till I have consumed them. Thus saith the Lord Zebaoth. Therefore, heed ye it, and call for the mourning-women, that they may come; and send for the poetesses, that they may come, that they may hasten hither, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may be suffused with tears, and our eyelids gush out with water. Hark, there is a voice of wailing, that proceedeth from Zion, "Ah, how unhappy, how confounded are we; we must leave our country, we are cast out from our dwellings." Yet hear the word of the Lord, O ye women, and let your ear receive the speech of his mouth; that ye may teach your daughters wailing, your companions lamentation. For death is come up into our windows, is entered into our palaces, and snatcheth away the children from the streets, the young men from the market-place. "Speak," thus saith the Lord, "Even the carcasses of men shall fall as dung upon the open field, and as the sheaf behind the reaper, which none gathereth." Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the mighty man in his might, nor the rich man in his riches; but let him that will glory, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, who exercise mercy and justice and benevolence on earth, and that in these I delight, saith the Lord.

II. HUMAN AID IS VANITY, WITH THE LORD ONLY IS TRUE HELP. ADMONITION NOT TO DESECRATE THE SABBATH; HE WHO HEEDS AND ACTS UP TO IT, SHALL ENJOY THE ABUNDANT BLESSING OF THE LORD.

Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, that relieth on human power, and whose heart turneth away from God. He shall resemble an isolated tree in desolate ground, which doth not perceive the good that cometh, which standeth in the sterile desert, in a parched land that is not inhabited. But blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. He shall be as a tree planted by the water, that spreadeth out its roots in the moist soil, that doth not feel the heat, whose leaf shall be evergreen, that feareth not the arid season, and ceaseth not from yielding fruit. He (that trusteth in men) is of an intriguing heart, more than any one; he is full of weakness, who knoweth him? But I, the Lord,

search the heart; I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. Like the cuckoo, that screameth and hatcheth no young ones, so is he who getteth riches, but not by right; in the midst of his days he shall leave them, and at his end shall be called a wretch. The Lord said, Go, and stand in the gate of the people, whereby also the kings of Judah come in and go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem, and say, Hear ye the words of God, ye kings, and all Judah, and ye citizens of Jerusalem, who pass through these gates. Beware, saith the Lord, lest ye carry a burden on the sabbath-day, and bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath-day, and transact ye no business; but hallow ye the sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers. But they (your fathers) obeyed not, neither inclined their ear to me; but they were so obstinate as not to hear, not to receive instruction. If now ye will diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, not to bring in a burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath-day, to hallow this day, and to abstain therein from all work: then shall there continue to enter into these gates kings and princes, sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their councillors, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and this city shall remain for ever. But if ye will not hearken unto me, to sanctify the sabbath-day, and ye will not forbear to convey burdens therein through the gates of Jerusalem; then will I kindle there an inextinguishable fire, that shall devour the gates of Jerusalem.

III. EXHORTATIONS TO BE FAITHFUL AND OBEDIENT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COUNTRY, AND TO BE PEACEABLE SUBJECTS. JEREMIAH'S ADVENTURES AND SUFFERINGS, HIS PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE IN HIS DIVINE AVOCATION, AND HIS FERVENT PATRIOTISM.

Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the elders, priests, prophets, and unto all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon. Thus saith the Lord of the universe, the God of Israel, unto all the captives that have been carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon, Build ye houses and dwell in them, plant gardens and eat the fruit thereof, and

seek ye the welfare of the city (namely, of the state) whither I have banished you; pray for it unto the Lord, for in its prosperity ye shall be prosperous.[1]

When Pashur, a superintendent of the temple, heard that Jeremiah had predicted the ruin of Jerusalem and of the temple, he struck him, and cast him into the dungeon, which was in the upper gate of Benjamin, by the house of the Lord. Jeremiah, however, did nevertheless predict to this very Pashur ruin and captivity at the taking of the city.

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, came to Jeremiah this word from the Lord, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Stand in the court of the temple, and speak unto the inhabitants of the cities of Judah, who come to worship, all the words that I command thee. Perhaps they will heed them, and return from their evil way; then I also will desist from the evil which I purpose to bring upon them. Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord, If ye will not hearken unto me, to walk in my law, and if ye will not listen to my prophets, whom I sent unto you, then will I make this house like *Shiloh*,[2] and this city to be a curse to all the nations of the earth: so when the priests and the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the temple, they seized him, and said, Thou shalt die. And the priests and the prophets accused him, before the councillors of the state, and before the people, for having prophesied the destruction of the city and of the temple. But Jeremiah defended himself, saying, The Lord sent me, to prophesy to you all these words; therefore, now amend your ways and your actions, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will not bring upon you the calamity with which he hath threatened you. As for me, behold, I am in your hand, do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you. But know, that if ye put me to death, ye shall bring innocent blood upon you, and upon this city, and upon its inhabitants; for, of a truth, the Lord hath sent me to speak all these words in your ears. Hereupon the councillors said, This man doth not deserve death; for he hath spoken to us in the name of the Lord. Did not also

[1] Hence it is evident, that it is the sacred duty of the Israelite to be solicitous about the welfare of the state in which he lives, and to avoid committing a breach of faith, either against the ruler or against the laws of the country.

[2] That is, where the Philistines took away from you the holy ark, which had been standing in Shiloh, and thereby destroyed the divine habitation.

Micah the prophet prophesy in the days of Hezekiah, and say "Thus saith the Lord Zebaoth, Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become like a heap of stones, and the mountain of the temple a woody hill." And did Hezekiah and the people of Judah put him to death on that account? Did he not rather fear the Lord, and besought him? The Lord also repented of the evil which he had pronounced against them, and should we burden our souls with so great a crime?

Some time afterwards, in the reign of king Zedekiah, Jeremiah, having been accused before the councillors, by a certain Irijah, of having had the intention to go over to the Chaldeans (Babylonians), who had besieged Jerusalem, was again seized, smitten, and put in prison, where he was compelled to remain a long time. One day, king Zedekiah sent to him, and had him taken out; and the king asked him secretly, whether he had received any word from the Lord. Yes, replied Jeremiah, and it is this, Thou shalt fall into the hand of the king of Babylon. Moreover, Jeremiah said unto the king, What have I offended against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have cast me into a dungeon? Where are now your prophets who prophesied unto you, The king of Babylon shall not come into this country? Therefore, hear now, O my lord, the king; let my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee, and send me not back again into the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there. Then king Zedekiah forthwith commanded, that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread, until all the bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

After this, Jeremiah was again accused by the leaders, of making the people and the men of war in the city inactive through his prophecies. The king placed him at their disposal, and so they took Jeremiah, and let him down with cords into a deep cistern: but in the cistern there was no water, but mire; so Jeremiah sunk in the mire. Now when a certain Cushite, a courtier, heard this, he reported it to the king, saying, O my lord, the king, these men have dealt evil by Jeremiah the prophet, in casting him into a cistern; already, in his former place, he was like to die for hunger, as there was no bread to be had in the city. Then the king commanded the Cushite to take some men with him, and to fetch Jeremiah out of the

cistern: so the Cushite went thither, with the men, and they threw down cords unto Jeremiah, which he fastened to his body, and so they drew him up out of the cistern. Thenceforward Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison, until Jerusalem was taken. And the Lord there said to Jeremiah, Go, and speak to the Cushite, saying, Thus saith the Lord of the universe, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring evil upon this city, as I have determined, and thou shalt see it: but I will deliver thee, so that thou shalt not fall into the hands of the men of whom thou art afraid; thy life shall be for a spoil unto thee, because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord.

And when the city and the temple were destroyed, and the people were either executed or carried away captives, Jeremiah was spared; for Nebuchadnezzar had given charge concerning Jeremiah, to Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard, saying, Take him under thy protection, and let not the least harm be done to him, but treat him according as he shall tell thee: so Nebuzar-adan had him brought before him, and ordered his chains to be taken off (he had been before put in chains, together with other prisoners), and left it at his option, either to remain in the country, or to remove to Babylon, under special protection. Jeremiah preferred remaining in the country: so Nebuzar-adan made him several presents, and dismissed him. Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, to Mizpah, and dwelt with him, among the rest of the people that were left in the land.

And it came to pass, ten days after Ishmael had caused Gedaliah to be slain, that the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, saying, Tell Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, who intend going to Egypt, they shall not be afraid of the king of Babylon, nor of the Chaldeans; but they shall remain in the country, and I will have mercy on you, and protect you. The Lord hath pronounced concerning you, Ye remnant of Judah, ye shall not go into Egypt, and ye shall know that I warn you against it: but they hearkened not to the voice of the Lord. And Johanan, the son of Kareah, took all who were returned (after the destruction of the city), for the purpose of dwelling in the land of Judah, and carried them away, together with Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch, the son of Nerijah, into Egypt; and they came as far as Tahpanhes, so Jeremiah now was in the land of Egypt.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

אֵיכָה

HE LAMENTS THE CALAMITY OF THE CITY OF GOD AND OF THE PEOPLE. CONFIDENCE IN THE GOODNESS AND MERCY OF GOD IN THE DAYS OF SUFFERING, AND HOPES OF A BETTER FUTURE.

ALAS, how doth the city sit solitary! the populous, now a deserted widow; the princess of the nations, the ruler of countries. Alas, she is now become tributary; she weepeth in the silent night, the hot tear wetteth her cheek; among all her lovers, she hath none to comfort her; all her friends have deserted her, and are become enemies; driven from her home, because of affliction and misery. Judah[1] would fain dwell among heathens, but she cannot find a place of rest; the pursuers overtake her on the frontiers. The streets of Zion now lie desolate, none cometh to the solemn feast; all her gates are void of people; priests sigh, virgins are afflicted, and she, she is a burden to herself. But her adversaries soar on high; her enemies prosper (the Lord hath brought upon her this mortification, because of her transgressions), while tyrants carry away her offspring captive before them. From the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed; her princes are become like hungry harts, which flee without strength before the huntsman. Now, in the days of her affliction, Jerusalem remembereth her past prosperity; now, that her people is fallen into the hand of the enemy, and none will help her; now, that her cruel adversaries see it, and mock at her desolation; now, she sigheth (because of her evil way), and would fain return. Alas, for these things I weep, mine eye is suffused with tears, because none will comfort me, none will raise my spirits, while my children perish by the enemy's superior power. The Lord is just, for I was disobedient. Hear it, all ye nations, and be-

[1] That is, the people represented as the house of Judah.

hold my sufferings; my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

Mine eyes do fail with tears; my heart burns with grief; my bile is poured out, because of the calamity of my people, whose children and sucklings swoon for hunger in all the streets. They entreat their mothers to give them bread and wine, they swoon as the wounded in the open street, and expire in the bosom of their mother.

Behold, O Lord, and consider, whom hast thou ever punished so severely? Shall mothers devour their own offspring; children brought up so delicately? Shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord? The young and the old, virgins and young men, lie in heaps about the streets, fallen by the sword; thou hast slain them in the day of thine anger, thou hast suffered them to be massacred, and hast not pitied.

I am the man who hath himself seen the affliction,
By the terror-striking rod of his wrath.
I have been torn away, and hunted about,
In profound darkness, with light nowhere.
Surely, over me he lifteth up his scourge continually,
Until my flesh and skin shall be consumed, and my bones broken.
Now the tyrant encompasseth me with strong walls,[1]
Where nought but suffering surroundeth me.
Now he letteth me down a dark pit, like those long dead;
He confineth me in the dungeon, lest I should escape,
And loadeth me with heavy chains.
I call and implore, but, alas,
The pent-up voice giveth back an empty sound.
Thus deprived of all happiness,
I already gave up all hopes,
And said, I am lost for ever:
There is no hope for me from the Lord;
For the remembrance of my bitter sufferings,
Of my misery, full of gall and wormwood,
Was constantly present to my mind,
And cast down my spirits within me.

[1] It need scarcely be observed, that the lamenting prophet does not speak of himself, but of the calamity which has befallen the holy city and his people, and that he here represents himself as personifying these.

But now I thus reply to my heart,
And hope again entereth it:
"As yet the Lord's mercy is not consumed,
His compassion not yet spent;
They are still renewed every morning;
Let thy confidence, therefore, be great."
"Truly the Lord is my salvation,"
Then, saith my soul,
"Therefore I hope in him.
He is good unto them that wait for him,
To the soul that devoutly seeketh him."
It is good that in resignation,
Man do wait for the salvation of the Lord.
Happy the man, who already in early youth,
Hath learned to bear the yoke;
In solitude, patiently to suffer
The lot fallen to his share;
To pray, though cast down to the dust,
And not to abandon hope;
To present the cheek to him that striketh it,
And to rejoice in his own reproach;
For the Lord forsaketh not for ever,
He only chastiseth, and then accepteth again,
With compassion, according to his great mercy.
Is it his delight to afflict,
And to chastise the children of men?
To crush under his feet,
The slaves of the earth?
Surely, to pervert a man's right,
Is hateful to the Lord;
To wrong a son of man,
The universal ruler can never wish.
Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass,
When the Lord commandeth it not?
When it proceedeth not out of the Lord's mouth,
Be it good or evil?
Wherefore doth a man complain here below,
Being master of his sins?
Let us search our way, and examine it,
And turn again to the Lord.
Let us lift up our heart on our hands,
Unto the throne of God in heaven.

Ours, ours is the fault,
We have transgressed and sinned,
Thou couldst pardon no longer.
Then thou didst wrap thyself in anger, and persecute us;
Thou didst slay without pity.
Veiled, behind a dark cloud,
That no prayer should pass through.
Thou hast made us the disgust, the abomination of the nations,
So that all our enemies triumph over us.
Fear and ruin, desolation and destruction,
Is now our sorrowful lot.
Mine eye is suffused with tears,
For the calamity of my people;
Mine eye shall shed tears unceasingly;
As from an inexhaustible source they shall flow,
Till, one day, the Lord in his mercy,
Shall again look down upon us from heaven.

For thou, O Lord, remainest the same for ever,
Thy throne from generation to generation.
Wouldst thou forget us for ever,
And forsake us for eternity?
O, receive us again, O Lord!
We return unto thee;
Renew the former happy times.
Shouldst thou have utterly rejected us?
Shouldst thou be so greatly wroth with us?
O, receive us again, O Lord!
We return unto thee;
Renew the former happy times.

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL.

סֵפֶר יְחֶזְקֵאל

THE REPENTANT AND PENITENT THE LORD RECEIVETH INTO FAVOUR, AND DELIVERETH THEM, FOR THE ETERNAL IS ALL-MERCIFUL. ADMONITION AGAINST SIN.

THE word of the Lord came to Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, the priest, while he was in the land of the Chasdim (Chaldeans), as follows: Son of man, I have appointed thee watchman over the house of Israel, therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and admonish them in my name.

When I sentence the wicked to death, and thou givest him no warning, nor speakest, to divert the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, then the wicked man dieth in his iniquity, and at thy hand will I require his blood; but, if thou warn the wicked, and yet he turn not from his wicked way, he certainly dieth in his iniquity; but thou hast saved thy soul. Again; when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block in his way, whereby his life shall be endangered; if then thou do not warn him, he shall die in his sin, and the good he hath done shall not be brought into account; but at thy hand will I require his blood. If, however, thou shalt have warned him, and prevented the righteous from committing sin, he shall surely live, because he took the warning; and thou, too, hast saved thy soul.

And the word of the Lord came unto me again, saying, What meaneth that proverb, which ye are in the habit of using in the land of Israel, namely, "The parents eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."[1] As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the son, and the soul of the father, are equally mine; he only that

[1] That is, the parents sinned, and the children have to expiate *their* sins.

sinneth shall die: but he that is pious, and practiseth justice and virtue, and hath not addicted himself to the abominations of idolatry, or to the sins of lewdness; he that hath never oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath committed no robbery, hath given of his bread to the poor, and hath covered the naked with a garment; he that hath not lent money on usury, neither hath taken any increase; that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath decided justly between man and man, hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, and dealt truly; he is a pious man, and shall surely live, saith the Lord: but if he beget a son that is degenerate, and even sheddeth blood, or committeth any like offences, doing that which is wicked, and forbearing to do that which is good, shall he then live? No: if he have been guilty of such crimes, he shall surely die; he hath forfeited his life. Now, if he in his turn beget a son, who hath witnessed all his father's sins, and yet hath not imitated them, but hath executed my judgments, and walked in my statutes, he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. The person only that sinneth shall die. The virtue of the pious is his own, and the wickedness of the wicked is his own. But even the wicked, if he turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed shall not be accounted to him; he shall live protected by the righteousness he exerciseth. Do I desire the death of the wicked? No: I desire that he return from his ways and live. On the other hand, when the righteous man deviateth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, shall he live? No: his righteousness shall not be accounted unto him, as soon as he trespasseth; for the sins which he hath committed shall he die. Will the house of Israel still say, The way of the Lord is unequal? Are my ways yet unequal, O house of Israel? Is it not rather your ways that are unequal? Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you, each according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent then, and desist from all your sins, so that iniquity prove not your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; get a new heart, and a new spirit, for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Surely I have no pleasure in the death of any one, saith the Lord God, wherefore repent, and live ye. Again the word of the Lord came

unto me, saying, Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and tell them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the country take a man from amidst them, and appoint him their watchman; if, when he seeth the sword of war come upon the land, he sound the trumpet, and warn the people; then, whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, but taketh no warning, and the sword cometh and snatcheth him away, his blood shall be upon his own head: but if the watchman see the sword come, and neglect to sound the trumpet, so that the people be not warned, if the sword come, and snatch away any person, it is true that person is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will nevertheless require at the hand of the watchman. So thou, O son of man, I have appointed thee a watchman over the house of Israel, thou hearest the word at my own mouth, and warnest them from me (in my name). If, now, I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt die; and thou hast not given him notice, and warned him from his evil way, that wicked man, it is true, dieth in his iniquity, but his blood will I, nevertheless, require at thy hand. If, however, thou hast admonished the wicked to desist from his way, and he do not turn from it, then shall he die on account of his iniquities, but thou hast delivered thy soul. Thou, O son of man, tell the house of Israel, Ye indeed spoke the truth, when ye said, Our sins are upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live? Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I delight not in the death of the wicked, but in his returning, so that he live. Return, return then, from your evil ways, for why will ye perish, O house of Israel?

THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS.[1]

תְּרֵי עָשָׂר

I. HOSEA.

הוֹשֵׁעַ

The word of the Lord, which came to Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of the reign of the kings of Judah, Usiah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; and of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel.

Come, and let us return unto the Lord. He hath wounded, and he will heal us again; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will completely raise us up, and then we shall live only in and before him. Let us attentively endeavour to know the Lord, whose going forth is as a bright morning's dawn;[2] he will then be a blessing to us, like a gentle shower, like the latter rain, which moisteneth the earth. But what shall I do unto thee, O Ephraim?[3] What shall I do unto thee, O Judah? Your goodness resembleth the morning cloud, the dew that falleth early and melteth soon; therefore, have I cut down the prophets, and slain them by the words of my mouth, that thy judgments (viz. that of the people) go forth to the light; for I delight in mercy, and not in sacrifice; in the knowledge of God, more than in burnt-offerings: but they (the priests and the prophets) have broken the covenant, and dealt treacherously against me.

O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen

[1] These minor prophets flourished in various reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel, and instructed the people by their prophecies. (From about 3080 to 3420, A.M.) Their prophecies and exhortations being contained in short books, they have been formed into *one* book, and are therefore called the *twelve minor* prophets.

[2] That is, the knowledge of him shall break forth within our minds like the dawn of the morning.

[3] Ephraim, sometimes also Joseph, was the name by which the prophets used to designate the house of Israel; because their first king, Jeroboam, was of the tribe of Ephraim.

by thine iniquity. Take with you words (prayers), and turn to the Lord; say unto him, O Thou, who forgivest all iniquity, receive us graciously; we will offer up to thee thanksgivings, instead of calves. *Asshur*[1] shall no longer be our refuge, we will not mount his horses any more, neither will we say any more to the works of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee only the fatherless people findeth mercy. Then (says the Lord), will I heal their backslidings, I will love them graciously, for mine anger shall be appeased; I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom like the rose, and strike root like the wood of Lebanon. His branches shall spread, beautiful as the olive-tree, fragrant as Lebanon. They all shall return, who formerly dwelt under his shadow; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, far-famed as the vine of Lebanon. Ephraim, is there yet any need of other gods beside me? I alone hear him and preserve him: I am to thee as a tree, affording abundance of shade, and yielding fruit unto thee.

He that is wise, understandeth it; he that is prudent, knoweth how just are the ways of the Lord. The pious walk confidently in them, but the wicked stumble therein.

II. JOEL.

יואל

THE PROPHET PREDICTS THE APPEARANCE OF A DREADFUL HOST OF LOCUSTS, WHICH, AS A VISITATION OF GOD UPON THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE, SHALL DESOLATE THE LAND. HE EXHORTS THE PEOPLE TO A SINCERE REPENTANCE AND AMENDMENT, WHEREUPON HAPPIER TIMES SHOULD SUCCEED.

Ye priests, gird yourselves in mourning, and lament with a loud voice, ye ministers of the altar. Go ye, and lay on sackcloth, ye ministers of my God; for the temple of your God now lacketh meat and drink-offering. Sanctify ye a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly; gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the temple of the Lord your God, and cry unto the

[1] Assyria.

Lord. Blow ye the cornet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain, that all the inhabitants of the land shall tremble; for the day of the Lord approacheth, it is nigh at hand: a day of darkness, of gloominess, and of misty clouds, dawning as the morning upon the mountains. And the thundering voice of the Lord is heard before his army. Numerous is his host, powerful are they who execute his word. How great is the day of the Lord. How terrible, how insupportable!

But now ye have yet time, saith the Lord, to turn to me with all your heart, by fasting, weeping, and wailing. Rend ye your heart, and not your garments, and return to the Lord your God.

Lo, he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and readily abandoneth his counsel, when he hath determined evil against us. Who knoweth, but that he may change his counsel, and leave a blessing behind him, that meat and drink-offering may again be offered up to the Lord your God? Blow the cornet in Zion, sanctify a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly. Gather the people, sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged, gather the children and the sucklings; let the bridegroom quit his festive chamber, and the bride her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar; and let them say, O Lord, spare thy people, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them.—Wherefore shall the nations say, "Where is their God?"—And behold, the Lord avengeth his land: hath again compassion on his people. Hearing their prayer, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will now again send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall enjoy it in abundance; and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathens. And that northern destroyer (namely, the host of locusts) I will remove far off from you, and will drive him into a barren land, and scatter him towards the east and the west. Fear no longer, O land, be glad and rejoice; for the Lord hath done great things. Be no longer afraid, ye grazing cattle. Already the desolate pastures are clad with verdure, the tree beareth her fruit, the fig-tree and the vine do yield their abundance. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God, who hath again given you the fertilising rain; the former and the latter rain again pour down for you, each in its season. The floors are now full of wheat, and the press over-

floweth with wine and oil. Thus I[1] make amends to you for the bad years which the locusts have caused you, that dreadful host, with which I visited you. And when ye eat in plenty, ye shall praise the Lord your God, who hath dealt wondrously with you, in that my people shall never again be brought to shame. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, I, the Lord, your God, and none else. Verily, my people shall never again be ashamed.

III. AMOS.

עָמוֹס

THE WORDS OF AMOS, WHO WAS AMONG THE HERDMEN OF TEKOA, AND WHO PROPHESIED CONCERNING ISRAEL IN THE DAYS OF UZZIAH, KING OF JUDAH, AND IN THE DAYS OF JEROBOAM, THE SON OF JOASH KING OF ISRAEL.

Hear ye, O house of Israel, the lamentation which I take up against you. The virgin of Israel hath fallen, she is unable to rise: she is stretched on the ground deprived of power, and there is none to raise her up. For thus saith the Lord God, In the city that went out by a thousand, a hundred only shall remain; in a city that went forth by a hundred, ten only shall remain. For he hath often sent word to the house of Israel, saying, Seek ye me, and ye shall live in happiness. But seek not Beth-el, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beer-sheba;[2] for Gilgal shall be overthrown, and Beth-el come to nought. Ye who convert justice into wormwood, and cast righteousness to the ground: consider, that he who created the seven stars and the orion; who turneth the shadow of death into morning, and the bright day into black darkness; who giveth the law to the waters of the ocean, and poureth them out upon the whole surface of the earth; the Lord is his name. Yea, he it is who causeth desolation to prevail against the strong, that desolation come upon the stronghold. But they hate him

[1] Here it is the Lord himself who speaks.
[2] All different places of idolatry.

that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly. Verily, because ye tread upon the poor, and deprive him of his painfully saved store, ye shall not inhabit your marble palaces, nor enjoy the fruit of the pleasant vineyards which ye have planted. For I know your manifold transgressions, your numberless sins; ye take a bribe, to oppress the just, and to pervert the right of the poor in the place of judgment. But let the prudent keep silence, and wait for the evil time that shall come.

Hate the evil, and love the good, and re-establish the administration of justice; and it may be that the Lord, the ruler of the universe, will again have compassion on the remnant of Joseph. Verily, thus saith the Lord, Wailing shall be in all streets, and cries of woe shall be heard in all the highways; even the husbandman shall be invited to the general mourning, and such as are skilful in lamentation to the wailing. From all vineyards anxious groans shall resound, when my judgment shall be sent forth, saith the Lord. Woe unto those who long for the day decreed by the Lord. To what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaning his hand on the wall, a serpent bit him. Shall not the day decreed by the Lord be dark, without a ray of light, even very dark, and no brightness in it?

Your feast-days are odious to me, I have no pleasure in your festive meetings. Though ye offer me burnt and meat-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take then away from me the noise of thy songs, I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice flow as a brook, and righteousness as a mighty stream. Did ye offer unto me sacrifices and meat-offerings the forty years that ye were in the wilderness?

Lo, it is determined, I will sift Israel among all nations, as one sifteth a thing in a sieve, and not a grain shall fall to the ground. Only all the sinners of my people shall die by the sword; all those who say, The evil shall not overtake and befall us. In that day will I re-erect the tabernacle of David that is fallen,[1] and close up the breaches thereof, and raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old.

Behold, times shall come, saith the Lord, when the plough-

[1] A figurative expression for the kingdom of David.

man shall meet the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. I will then release my people from captivity, and they shall rebuild the desolate cities, and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also cultivate gardens, and enjoy the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, that they shall never again be cast out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord, thy God.

IV. OBADIAH.

עֹבַדְיָה

PROPHECY CONCERNING EDOM.

THUS saith the Lord God concerning Edom, Behold, I have made thee the smallest of nations; thou wast greatly despised. Yet thou boastest with insolent pride, and dwelling in the clefts of the rock on an elevated seat, thou sayest in thy heart, No one is able to throw me down to the earth. But though thou soar on high like the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, even thence will I bring thee down. For the wickedness perpetrated on thy brother Jacob,[1] shame should cover thy countenance; for that, thou shalt be exterminated for ever. In the day that thou stoodest afar off, in the day that barbarians despoiled him of his substance, and tyrants entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, even thou wast one of them. But thou shouldst not have looked with pleasure on the day of thy brother, in the day of his expulsion; neither shouldst thou have rejoiced over the sons of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldst thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress. Thou shouldst not have entered the gates of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldst not have looked on their affliction in the evil

[1] The people of Edom had at all times evinced hostile feelings towards Judah, and rejoiced at his destruction.

day, nor have laid hands on their substance; neither shouldst thou have lain in wait in the crossway, to cut down his fugitives; nor have delivered up those of his that were saved in the day of distress. Therefore, when the day of vengeance cometh upon all the nations, it shall be done unto thee even as thou hast done; thou shalt be rewarded according to thy deeds. But there shall be deliverance upon mount Zion, for it shall be holy; then shall those of the house of Jacob regain their former possessions, and deliverers shall ascend mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau.[1] Then the dominion shall again be the Lord's.

V. JONAH.[2]

יוֹנָה

I. JONAH'S FLIGHT AND THE INCIDENTS CONNECTED WITH IT. THE CREW OF THE VESSEL RESPECT HUMANITY AND FEAR THE LORD.

Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and denounce it (namely, proclaim its destruction), for her wickedness is come before me. But Jonah arose to flee unto Tarshish,[3] from the presence of the Lord; he therefore went to Joppa, and there he found a ship bound for Tarshish, so he paid the fare, and went down into it. But the Lord stirred up a great wind against the sea, a mighty tempest arose, and the ship was like to become a wreck. Then the mariners were alarmed, and prayed every one to his god, and cast the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship, and lay there fast asleep. So the ship-master came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God; perhaps that God will have pity on us, that we perish

[1] That is, the possessions of Edom.
[2] Jonah was contemporary with the prophets Elisha, Hosea, and Amos.
[3] Supposed to have been on the Spanish coast.

not. Meanwhile the mariners had said one to another, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know thereby to whom among us we have to ascribe this calamity. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. Then they said unto him, Tell thou us, we pray, for whose cause this evil is upon us; what is thine occupation, and whence comest thou? What is thy country, and of what people art thou? And he replied, I am a Hebrew, and worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who hath made the sea and the dry land. Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and asked him, What hast thou done? And when they heard that he had escaped from the presence of the Lord (for he had confessed it to them), they said unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea about us may be calm? for the sea is rising, and groweth more and more tempestuous. And he answered them, and said, Take me up, and cast me into the sea, so shall the sea be calm; for I know too well that only for my sake this great tempest is upon you.[1] Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to bring the ship to the land, but they could not; for the sea wrought and was tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, let us not perish on account of this man, and lay not upon us innocent blood; for it is thou, O Lord, who dost as it pleaseth thee. So they took up Jonah, and cast him into the sea; and the sea soon ceased from her raging. Then the men evinced great fear of the Lord, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows. But the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord out of the fish's belly, and said,

In my distress I call upon the Lord,
And he heareth me;
I cry out of the depth of hell,

[1] On this occasion the prophet partly atoned for his previous transgression, in disobeying the Lord's behest. He not only did not remain callous to the danger of his fellow passengers, but he rather deemed it his duty to condemn himself as the guilty, and as such to sacrifice himself for their salvation; and so he actually did. Self-preservation and the innate love of life have no longer a voice for him, he only sees and feels the danger of his fellow-men, and is ready to sacrifice his life with a view to save theirs. And so we are indeed commanded to do by the voice of humanity. Wherever and whenever the life of our fellow-man is endangered, we are bound to hazard our own life in attempting to save his; but the duty becomes still more binding on us when we ourselves are the cause of the danger.

Yet thou hearest my voice.
Though thou castest me into the deep,
That the floods compass me about,
Though all thy billows and thy waves pass over me,
So that, desponding, I might say,
I am cast out of thy sight;
Yet I shall again behold thy holy temple.
Let waters encompass me even to the soul,
Let the depth close me round about,
And the weeds be wrapt about my head;
Though I be hurled down,
To the bottoms of the mountains, [for ever:
So that the nether world with her eternal bars encircle me
Yet thou bringest up my life from the deep,
O Lord, my God.
And when my spirit threateneth to despair,
I remember thee, O Lord,
That to thee my prayer ascendeth,
Into thy holy temple.
They that heed idle superstitions,
Soon forsake their piety;
But I will sacrifice to thee, amidst thanksgivings,
And willingly pay that which I have vowed.
Salvation is only of the Lord.

And the Lord gave his command to the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon dry land.

II. REPENTANCE AND REFORMATION OF THE INHABITANTS OF NINEVEH; THE LORD GRANTS THEM PARDON, AND SPARES THEM. JONAH IS DISPLEASED WITH IT, AND GOD REPROVES HIM.

And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that famous city, and proclaim there what I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, as the Lord had commanded him. Now Nineveh was a great city before the Lord, having an extent of three days' journey. And Jonah had not reached further than one day's journey in the city, when he exclaimed and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." And the people of Nineveh

immediately believed in this prediction of God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. And when this matter came before the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, took off his robe, and sat down in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed, and made public through Nineveh, This is the decree of the king and of his nobles: let neither man nor beast taste anything, let neither herd nor flock graze or drink water; but let all be covered with sackcloth, and let every one fervently call upon the Lord: yea, let them desist every one from his evil way, and from the iniquity which cleaveth to his hands. Who can tell but that God may again have compassion, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? So when God saw their works, that *they had turned from their evil way*,[1] he pardoned them, and did not to them according as he had threatened. But this displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was much mortified. And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, O Lord, was not this what I said when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish. For I knew that thou art a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and of great kindness, easily averting the evil with which thou threatenest. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live. Then said the Lord, Dost thou well to be angry? Now Jonah had previously left the city, and selected for himself a seat on the east side, where he erected a booth, and sat under its shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. And the Lord God had prepared there a kikajon,[2] which came up over Jonah, that it might serve him as a screen over his head, and deliver him from his grief. So Jonah greatly rejoiced at the kikajon. But already, the following day when the morning dawned, God sent a worm which gnawed in the kikajon, so that it

[1] God saw that their lives were in harmony with their fasting and praying, and that they were faithful to their resolution of returning to the path of virtue and justice, as evinced by their actions. The text says, God saw their works, not their praying and fasting; for such external penitence, namely, prayer and fast-day, must be coupled with inward repentance and moral improvement to be called penitence, and to be acceptable to the Lord. See also on this subject the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah, p. 249).

[2] A bush-like plant (according to trustworthy commentators the so-called wonderful tree *Ricenus)* which rapidly shoots forth, bearing large leaves, and, like the palm, affording abundant shade.

withered. And it came to pass when the sun did arise, that God ordered forth a vehement east wind, and the sun burned so fiercely upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted. Then he wished to die, and said, "Truly it is better for me to die than to live." And God said unto Jonah, Dost thou well to be grieved for the kikajon? Jonah answered, Indeed I am right in being grieved, even unto death. Then said the Lord, Wouldst thou have the kikajon spared, which hath not grown up by thine industry, which came up in a night, and perished in a night? And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than twelve times ten thousand persons, that know not yet how to distinguish between right and left,[1] and also much cattle.[2]

VI. MICAH.

מִיכָה

The word of the Lord which came to Micah, the Morashite, in the reign of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, to prophesy concerning Amaria and Jerusalem.

Hear, all ye people;
Hearken, O earth, and all that therein is:
Let the Lord God be witness,
God in his sanctuary.
For, behold, the Lord ariseth from his dwelling-place,

[1] Namely, innocent children.

[2] A strong sense of virtue and right, and a deep abhorrence of vice, were the sole causes of the grief which the pious prophet felt at the pardon of the culpable sinners. But far as is earth from heaven, even so far is human judgment from the dispensations of Providence. As a tender father again receives the son who went astray, so the Lord accepts the penitent sinner who returns to him. The understanding of man, however, is limited; he cannot comprehend the gracious disposition of his Father in heaven, who loves every one of his creatures. The Lord, therefore, by a clear illustration,—by the kikajon,—points out to the prophet his error, and the injustice of his grief, and bids him submit in silent humility.

Descendeth, and treadeth
Upon the high places of the earth.
Mountains melt under him,
Deep valleys shall be cleft,
As wax melteth before the fire,
As the floods are precipitated down the rock.
For the transgression of Jacob is all this,
And for the sins of the house of Israel.
What is Jacob's transgression?
What else but Amaria?
Where are the high places of Judah?
Where but in Jerusalem?
Therefore shall Amaria be as a desolate stone field,
And as a waste vineyard.
Its stones shall be cast down into the valley,
And the foundations thereof will I uncover.
Therefore, I wail and raise woful sounds,
And roam about, stript and naked: [young ostrich;
Making a wailing like the crocodile, and a mourning as the
For her wounds are incurable.
The evil hath spread as far as Judah,
It hath advanced into the interior of the land,
Even to Jerusalem.
Hear ye now what the Lord saith:
Arise, contend thou with the mountains,
And let the hills hear thy voice.
Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy,
And ye strong foundations of the earth;
For the Lord hath a controversy with his people,
And pleadeth before Israel.
What have I done unto thee, O my people?
Say, wherewith have I molested thee?
Did I not bring thee up out of the land of Egypt,
And redeem thee from the house of bondage?
Did I not send Moses, Aaron, and Miriam before thee?
Wouldst thou, O my people, but remember,
What Balak, king of Moab, had determined against thee,
And what Balaam, the son of Beor, was compelled to answer
him,
And what happened at Shittim and at Gilgal,
Thou wouldst indeed discern therein the righteousness of
the Lord.

The prophet speaketh in the name of the people.

Wherewith shall I appease the Lord,
And how shall I bow myself before the high God?
Shall I appease him with burnt-offerings,
And implore his mercy by offering calves of a year old?
What! will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
Or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? [first-born?
Can I compensate for my transgression by giving up my
Can I atone with the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
O man, thou hast long since been told
What is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee:
But to practise justice, to love mercy,
And to walk humbly with thy God.
Who is, O God, like unto thee,
Pardoning iniquity,
And passing by the transgression
Of the remnant of his heritage?
He retaineth not his anger for ever,
Because he delighteth in mercy.
He will again have compassion upon us;
And suppressing (the memory of) our iniquities,
Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea,
Thou wilt perform that truth to Jacob,
And that mercy to Abraham,
Which thou hast sworn unto our fathers in the days of old.

VII. NAHUM.

נַחוּם

PREDICTION CONCERNING NINEVEH.

JEALOUS is the Almighty, and the Lord revengeth; yet he is master over his wrath. The Lord is slow to anger, and of infinite power; yet he leaveth nothing unpunished. He rideth the whirlwind and the storms; mighty clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea and maketh it dry, he drieth up great rivers; Bashan and Carmel languish, and the flower

of Lebanon fadeth. How do the mountains quake at him, and the hills melt. The earth is startled by his regards; yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can withstand his wrath? Who can resist the fierceness of his anger? His fury descendeth like flaming lightning, and mighty rocks are dashed to pieces before him. But the Almighty availeth for a stronghold in the day of trouble; he protecteth those who trust in him. What do ye imagine against the Lord? Destruction is breaking out, it shall root up every thing at once.

Behold, upon yonder mountains, the feet of him that bringeth good tidings. He announceth salvation. Keep now thy solemn feasts, O Judah, perform thy vows; for the tyrant shall no more fall upon thee, he is utterly cut off.[1] The destroyer, who came up against thee, now is blocked up in his stronghold. Look towards the highway, take courage, and fortify thyself with great strength. For the Lord restoreth the excellency of Jacob, and also that of Israel; the people that have been robbed by daring robbers, and whose vine branches have been marred. Thy councillors slumber, O king of Assyria; thy chiefs lie fast asleep, while thy people are scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them. No one is grieved at thy fall, or is troubled because of thy wounds; whoever heareth of thy fall, shall clap his hands over thee: for who is there that hath not felt thy wickedness continually.

VIII. HABAKKUK.

חֲבַקּוּק

HE COMPLAINS OF VIOLENCE, INJUSTICE, AND OPPRESSION; HE COMFORTS THE GOOD AND PIOUS WITH THE APPROACHING DELIVERANCE AND SALVATION OF THE LORD, AND WITH THE ANNIHILATION OF THE WICKED.

How long, O Lord, shall I cry,
And thou wilt not hear?

[1] This consolatory address of the prophet is grounded upon the impending fall of Nineveh, the capital of the Babylonian empire, whereby the Jewish nation was to be delivered of its powerful enemy, and the holy worship of God to be restored; and so indeed it came to pass, after the conversion of Manasseh. (Vide Book of Kings.)

How long shall I complain to thee of violence,
And thou wilt not save?
Why dost thou let me behold calamity and woe?
Spoiling and violence stare me in the face,
And strife and contention are raised up.
The law is slackened,
And judgment never goeth forth.
The guilty ensnare the righteous;
Therefore, wrong judgment proceedeth.
Art not thou, O Lord, from the beginning,
My God and my protector?
We shall not perish.
Thou hast selected them, O Lord, for vengeance,
And destined them for the rod of punishment;
Thine eyes are too pure,
To look on wickedness;
Thou canst not look on iniquity. [iniquity,
Wherefore, then, lookest thou upon them that commit
And art silent when the wicked devoureth the righteous?

I stood upon my watch,
And placed myself upon a tower,
To watch what revelation would be made to me,
And what I shall answer to my reproof.
Then the Lord answered me, and said,
Write down the vision,
Make it plain upon tablets,
That he may run that readeth it.
And though it referreth only to after times,
And speaketh only of the remote end,
Yet it shall at last be consummated, and not deceive.
Though it tarry, wait for it,
For it cometh;
It will surely come, and not fail.
Behold, he is haughty whose soul delighteth not in Him:
But the just is happy in his faith.[1]

Woe to him that, by covetousness,

[1] That is, he perseveres in his pious conduct, though he have to suffer adversity, firmly believing and trusting, that the just and merciful Disposer of events will one day reward the good, and punish the bad.

Amasseth unjust wealth in his house,
That he may erect his seat on high,
That he may escape the power of evil.
The stone in the wall accuseth thee,
And the beam in the timber proclaimeth it.

Is it not of the Lord of the universe,
That the people shall labour for a burning fire,[1]
And nations weary themselves for very vanity?
For the earth shall be filled
With the knowledge of the glory of the Lord,
As the waters cover the sea.

IX. ZEPHANIAH.

צְפַנְיָה

THE LORD WILL PUNISH ISRAEL FOR THEIR SINS; AFTERWARDS, THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN PURIFIED AND CORRECTED SHALL STRIVE TO BE VIRTUOUS, AND ALL THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH SHALL UNANIMOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE LORD.

THE word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah, in the days of Josiah, king of Judah.

Wait ye for me, saith the Lord, wait ye for the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, to assemble the kingdoms, that I may pour upon them mine anger: yea, the fire of my jealousy shall burst forth upon the whole earth. *Then will I convert the language of the heathens into a pure one,*[2] *that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.* From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, where my worshippers are dispersed,[3] they shall be brought back as an offering to me. In that day thou shalt no longer blush for thy former transgressions; for then

[1] Meaning the remorse with which unjustly-gotten wealth fills our breast.
[2] That is, their idolatry into the worship of the One God.
[3] Namely, the ten tribes dispersed by Shalmanasser.

will I take away out of the midst of thee those of insolent pride, and thou shalt no more lift thyself up in haughtiness upon my holy mountain. I will leave amidst of thee only a people of a humbled and dejected spirit, confiding in the name of the Lord. This remnant of Israel shall not commit iniquity, nor utter lying words; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid in their dwellings.

Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath averted thy judgments, and removed thy adversaries; the Lord, the king of Israel, again reigneth in the midst of thee; thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thy hands be slack. The Lord, thy God, resideth in the midst of thee, a victorious hero. He will rejoice over thee with delight, he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. Those outcast ones, who were sorrowful because of the interruption of the solemn assembly, I will gather again; they have long enough borne the oppressive reproach. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee, I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out, and I will get them praise; over the whole earth will I convert their reproach into honour. At that time will I bring you again and gather you; I will make you a glory and honour among all the nations of the earth, when ye shall behold that I bring you back out of your captivity, saith the Lord.

X. HAGGAI.

חַגַּי

THE PROMISE OF THE LORD MADE THROUGH HAGGAI, THE PROPHET, TO ZERUBBABEL, THE PRINCE OF JUDAH, AND TO JOSHUA THE PRIEST.

THUS speaketh the Lord of the universe, This people say, the predicted time is not yet come, the time is not yet arrived,

that the temple of the Lord should be rebuilt. Therefore came the word of the Lord to you, through Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you to dwell in your ceiled houses while this temple is lying in ruins? Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of the universe, Consider your ways; ye have sown much, and the produce is small; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but not in plenty; ye clothe yourselves, but are not warmed; and every gain is dissipated as in a bag with holes. Consider, I pray ye, saith the Lord, your situation.[1] Go up to the mountain, procure wood, and build the temple; and I will take pleasure in it, and be glorified, saith the Lord. Ye seek superfluity, and want prevaileth; ye have housed the profit, and I dissipate it by my breath. Why is this so? saith the Lord of the universe. Because of my temple (that is, because of the worship of God), which lieth waste, *since every one of you careth but for his own house.* Therefore the heaven over you refuseth the dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit; and I determined a drought to come upon the mountains and upon the land, upon the corn, the new wine, the oil, and upon every production of the ground; and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands. Then Zerubbabel, and Joshua the priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord, their God, especially in consequence of the words of Haggai, the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him. But as the people still entertained fears (with regard to the threatening of the Lord), Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, concluded his message unto the people with these words, "I will be with you," saith the Lord. Hereby the Lord stirred up the courage of Zerubbabel, and of Joshua the high priest, and the courage of all the remnant of the people, so that they set about the work of erecting the temple.[2]

And the word of the Lord came a second time to Haggai, the prophet, saying, Speak now to Zerubbabel, to Joshua the priest, and to the people, saying, Is there among you any one who hath been left (of those emigrants), and who saw this temple in its former splendour? then it will certainly, as he beholdeth it now, appear to him very insignificant. However, be not dispirited, saith the Lord; accomplish your work, for

[1] By considering and reflecting on his condition, man is led to a consideration of his own moral conduct; and this is here evidently the object of the exhortation of the prophet.

[2] See the Book of Ezra.

I am with you. That covenant which I entered into with you when I brought ye out of Egypt,—my spirit still abideth in the midst of you (to keep it and to assist you), be ye, therefore, not dismayed. For thus saith the Lord, Yet a little while, and I will shake the heaven and the earth, the sea and the dry land;[1] I will shake whole nations, that they shall come with their choice treasures, and I will fill this house with glory. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. Yea, the glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, when I shall have caused happiness to spring forth in this place, saith the Lord, the God of the universe.[2]

XI. ZECHARIAH.

זְכַרְיָה

CONSOLATORY PREDICTION CONCERNING THE FUTURE.

In the eighth month in the second year of the reign of Darius, came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, saying,

Once the Lord was very wroth with your forefathers. Tell them (their children) now, saith the Lord of the universe, Return ye unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord, the ruler of the universe. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets cried in the name of the Lord, "Turn ye from your evil ways, and cease your evil doings;" but they would not hear, saith the Lord. Your fathers indeed are no more, and the prophets,—they could not live for ever; but my threatenings and my judgments, which I commanded my servants, the prophets, to announce to them, did take hold of your fathers, so that they at last considered and confessed, saying, Like as the Lord thought to do unto us,

[1] That is, God, in his omnipotence, can soon change the present state of things.

[2] The prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi having, as appears from the contents, lived and prophesied after the Babylonian captivity, the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah ought to stand and be read before these three books; but the connection of the twelve minor prophets rendered such an arrangement improper.

according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.

Again the word of the Lord came unto the prophet, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I will return unto Zion, and dwell again in Jerusalem. And Jerusalem shall be called "City of Truth," and the mountain of God "Holy Mountain." There shall yet old men and women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, each leaning on the staff for very age. And the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. And if this be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it for that reason also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of the universe. Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will save my people from the east country and from the west country; and I will bring them back unto Jerusalem, where they shall dwell in tranquillity, and be my people, while I will be their God in truth and righteousness. Therefore, let not your courage fail you, ye that heard in those days these words by the mouth of the prophets, in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. For before these days man's industry did not thrive, there was no profit in cattle; the traveller was not safe from the rage of the enemy, for I excited all men one against another. But now I will not be to the remnant of this people what I was in former times, saith the Lord of the universe. For the seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, the ground yield a rich produce, and the heavens give their dew. All these blessings I will bestow upon the remnant of this people. And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathens, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so shall ye then, through my salvation, be a blessing; therefore, fear not, but be of good courage. For thus saith the Lord, As I thought to punish you when your fathers provoked me to wrath, so again I have now determined to do well unto Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah; therefore, do not despond. These are the things that ye shall do, *speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates; let not your heart devise evil against your fellow-man; and love not perjury:* for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord.

XII. MALACHI.

מַלְאָכִי

THE WORSHIP OF GOD SHOULD BE PERFORMED IN HOLINESS AND PURITY OF HEART AND LIFE. CONSOLATION FOR THE PIOUS.

A SON honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord, the God of the universe. "Wherein have we despised thy name?" ye say. Ye offer polluted bread on mine altar, and ye yet ask, while ye show how indifferent ye are to the table of the Lord, "Wherein have we despised thy name?" If ye offer defective animals for sacrifice, if ye offer blind, lame, and sick cattle, is this no evil? Offer such unto thy prince, and see whether he will be pleased with thee, or receive thee graciously? saith the Lord. "Now beseech God, that he may have compassion on us." Ye have dealt towards me in this manner, saith the Lord, and ye expect to be accepted? If there were but one among you that would shut the gates, so that mine altar were not lighted in vain. As things are, I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord; neither will I accept an offering at your hands.[1] For from the rising of the sun, even unto the setting thereof, my name is extolled among the nations. In every place incense and sacrifices are offered unto my name in pure devotion; for my name is great among the heathens, saith the Lord, the ruler of the universe.

Ye say, It is in vain to serve God; what profit is it, that we observe his ordinances, and walk mournfully before the Lord? Do we not call the wicked happy, see evildoers thrive, and they that tempt God free from calamity? But they that fear the Lord hold converse one with another, saying, Of a truth, the Lord hearkeneth, and heareth it, and in the book of remembrance it is inscribed before him, For them that fear the

[1] Let this be an admonition to us, and let us impress it on our minds, that we at all times may perform the external worship of God with a holy dignity, solemn gravity, and humble devotion. Let us further take to heart, that it is far from indifferent in what manner religious acts are performed, but that we are rather guilty of a great sin if we discharge the sacred duty of worshipping God callously and thoughtlessly, or perhaps even in a manner likely to excite ridicule.

Lord and revere his name. They shall be mine, saith the Lord, my beloved treasure in the day which I will create; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that is faithful to him. Then shall ye enter within yourselves, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. For behold, the day cometh, burning as an oven, and consuming the wicked and the evildoers like stubble, that neither root nor branch shall be left, saith the Lord. But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise, healing with its rays; and ye shall go forth and bask in it, like fat calves. And ye shall crush the wicked; they shall be as ashes under the soles of your feet in the day of judgment, which I will bring, saith the Lord of hosts. Remember ye, therefore, the law of Moses my servant, the commandments and statutes which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel. Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and awful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers,[1] lest I come and smite the land with annihilation. Therefore, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and awful day of the Lord.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

סֵפֶר דָּנִיֵּאל

RELIGIOUS ABSTEMIOUSNESS OF THE FOUR JEWISH YOUTHS DANIEL, HANANIAH, MISHAEL, AND AZARIAH.

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim into his hand,

[1] The same as was done by the holy man in the reign of Ahab, when he caused universal and public homage to be paid to the Lord (see the Book of Kings, p. 208), and brought back the hearts of the people to (the God of) their fathers.

with part of the holy vessels of the temple, which he had conveyed into his country.[1] After some time, the king commanded one of his officers, that he should bring some Jewish youths, of the royal blood, or of some other noble descent, and have them instructed in the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans: such youths as had no bodily blemish, but were of a good appearance and quick intelligence, as were also possessed of knowledge and ingenuity, and at the same time had the ability to wait on the king in the palace. And they were daily to partake of the king's own dishes, and of the wine which he drank: so they were to be maintained for three years, that at the expiration thereof, some of them might attend on the king. The officer did so; and among the youths that were selected, the following particularly distinguished themselves, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, of the sons of Judah. Daniel, having determined not to suffer himself to be defiled by the royal viands, nor by the wine which the king drank, addressed a request to the officer to that effect. Now God had indeed caused Daniel to find grace and favour in the eyes of the officer; nevertheless, he said to Daniel, I am afraid of my lord, the king, who hath appointed your provisions for you. (The other three had taken the same resolution as Daniel.) If, then, he should find you look worse than other youths, why will ye endanger my head to the king? But Daniel said to the steward, Try it with thy servants for ten days and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then examine, whether we, or those lads who partake of the royal viands, have a better appearance; and as thou seest, deal with thy servants: so he complied in this matter, and tried them ten days. And when that time was expired, it was found that they looked much better than those youths who had partaken of the dishes that came from the royal table.[2] The steward now kept

[1] This taking of Jerusalem happened twenty years previous to its destruction in the time of Zedekiah.

[2] Such are the salutary consequences of abstemiousness, temperance, and piety. Neither dainties nor delicious wines make and preserve the body healthy and the mind cheerful, but that noble *temperance*, which is the faithful concomitant of piety and virtue; temperance produces health and cheerfulness, for it is the source of contentment and of a dignified conduct. He who is moderate in the enjoyments of life, possesses self-knowledge, and hence is also able to practise self-control, both which are the surest means of arriving at perfection. The four noble youths here furnish an example worthy of imitation, showing, as they do, how rigid they were in the observance of the law of their holy religion, even in the most pro-

the food and wine apportioned to them for himself, and gave them pulse. And the Lord bestowed on these four youths knowledge and understanding, so that they were skilled in all learning, and in all the sciences. But Daniel was especially skilled in interpreting visions and dreams. Now when at the appointed time all the youths were presented to king Nebuchadnezzar, the king conversed with them, and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; these, therefore, were retained at court. In every department of knowledge, in which the king required to know anything, he found them ten times superior to all the magicians and philosophers in all his kingdom: so Daniel thenceforth continued to remain at the royal court.

II. DANIEL REVEALS TO NEBUCHADNEZZAR THE CONCEALED DREAM, AND THE INTERPRETATION THEREOF, AND IS PROMOTED TO HIGH AND HONOURABLE OFFICES.

Soon afterwards, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams, which disquieted him exceedingly. Then he sent for the magicians, soothsayers, and astrologers, to come and tell him the dream, as well as the interpretation thereof; for he had forgotten the dream itself. But when they replied and said, The king should tell them the dream, and then they would show him its interpretation, the king answered and said, If ye do not show me the dream, as well as the interpretation, your bodies shall be cut to pieces, and your houses be converted into a dunghill. But they answered again, and said, Let the lord our king tell his servants the dream, and we will immediately show the interpretation of it; for there is not a man upon the earth who could satisfy this wish of the king. The matter is not to be solved, and there is none but the gods, whose dwelling is not among mortals, that could execute this command. For this cause the king was very furious, and ordered all the wise men of Babylon to be slain. The decree was already being carried out, already some were killed, and an attempt was also made to slay Daniel and his associates. Then Daniel inquired of Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, what was the reason that this dreadful decree had been issued. And

sperous condition of life, not caring what would happen to them in consequence of such observance, or how it would be judged.

when Arioch had told him the reason, Daniel went to the king, and asked him, that he would give him time to show the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, communicated the matter to them, and recommended them to address a devout supplication to the God of heaven concerning this secret, that Daniel and his companions should not perish, like the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Soon after the secret was revealed unto Daniel in a vision by night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven, saying, Extolled be the name of God for ever and ever! Wisdom and omnipotence are his; he changeth times and circumstances; he removeth kings (from their thrones), and setteth up kings; he imparteth wisdom to the wise, and understanding to the men of understanding; he revealeth the most hidden things; he knoweth what is in the darkness, yet he is ever surrounded by light. I thank thee and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers; thou hast given me wisdom, and strengthened me with courage; thou hast heard my prayer, and revealed to me the secrets of the king.

Hereupon Daniel had himself introduced to the king. The king asked him, Art thou able to make known to me the vision which I have had in a dream, as well as its interpretation? Daniel answered the king, and said, The secret which the king desireth to know is of such a nature, that neither the wise men, nor the astrologers, nor the magicians, nor the soothsayers, are able to disclose it. But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets. It is he that maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall happen in later times. But to me this secret hath been revealed by God in heaven, to make known the interpretation to thee, O king, that thou mayest learn what thy heart desireth to know. Thou, O king, sawest, and, behold, a great image, of extraordinary brightness, and of terrible form, stood before thee. Its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thigh of brass, its legs part of iron and part clay. And a stone was cut out, but not by human hands, which broke the image to pieces, and ground it to atoms, so that all the gold, silver, iron, brass, and clay thereof, was scattered like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, by the wind, and was no where to be found; but the stone that broke the image became a great mountain, extending over the whole earth: this is the dream. Let the king now hear the interpretation thereof. Thou, O

king of kings, who hast obtained of God in heaven, extensive power and dominion, strength and majesty, thou art this *head of gold.* After thee shall arise a second power, inferior to thee; this shall be succeeded by a third power, which shall bear rule over all the earth. But after this, a fourth power shall arise, which, like iron, shall cut to pieces, and annihilate every thing. And whereas thou sawest the feet part of iron and part of clay, this power shall be divided, and of unequal strength; that is, it shall be partly strong, and partly weak. In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a power, which shall annihilate all these powers (like that stone which broke to pieces every thing, and whose size extended over all the earth); the power itself, however, shall never be destroyed, but shall endure for ever: this is the interpretation of the vision. In this manner the great God hath made known to the king what shall happen in later times. The king hereupon fell upon his face, bowed himself unto Daniel, and commanded that they should offer oblations unto him. And the king said to Daniel, Of a truth, your God is the God of all gods, the Lord of all lords, the revealer of secrets, seeing that he enabled thee to disclose this secret to me. Then the king promoted Daniel to high dignities, made him rich presents, and nominated him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. At the request of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were likewise appointed governors in the province of Babylon: but Daniel himself remained at the royal court.

III. THE THREE MEN IN THE FURNACE.

"But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, he is their protection in distress; the Lord assisteth them and delivereth them, for they trust in him." Psalm xxxvii. 39, 40.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, the king, once had a high golden statue made, which was erected in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. And he gave instructions to all the chiefs and high dignitaries of the realm, to assemble for the inauguration of the image which the king had set up. So all the chiefs and high dignitaries of the realm met on the appointed day to celebrate the inauguration of the newly-erected statue. Then a herald cried aloud, To you, O people, nations and languages,

it is commanded, that at what time ye hear the sound of the trumpets and of the cornets, ye shall all of you prostrate yourselves, and worship the statue that the king hath set up. And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And now the sound of the trumpets and cornets was heard, and all the people present prostrated themselves, and worshipped the golden statue. Soon after, certain Chaldeans went to the king, and accused the Jews. They spoke and said, O king, live for ever. Thou, O king, hast issued a decree, that every man shall, at the given signal, prostrate himself unto and worship the golden image; and that he who shall fail to do so, should be cast into a burning fiery furnace. Now there are certain Jews, named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,[1] to whom is entrusted the management of the affairs of the province of Babylon; these men have not heeded thy orders, O king, for they neither worship thy gods, nor prostrate themselves before the golden statue thou hast erected. Then Nebuchadnezzar was inflamed with rage, and he forthwith commanded Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to be brought before him. And they appeared before the king. Nebuchadnezzar said unto them, Is it true that ye do not worship my gods, nor prostrate yourselves unto the golden statue? Now I command you, forthwith, to obey my orders, and to prostrate yourselves, like the rest, unto the statue; but if ye fail to do it, ye shall be cast the same hour into a burning fiery furnace. Where is there any deity that could deliver you out of my hands? And Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered the king, and said, It is true, it becometh us not to answer thee in this matter; for know thou, that our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace, as well as out of thy hand. Be it, however, known unto thee, that we will neither serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and commanded the most mighty men in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace, which was to be heated seven times more than usually. And they were immediately seized, and bound in their garments, and cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

[1] These are the Chaldean names of the three friends of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

But the furnace was so exceeding hot, that the flame laid hold of those men that had cast the three men into it, and consumed them. Then Nebuchadnezzar, the king, was astonished, and rose up from his seat in haste, and asked his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. And he continued and said, But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, without being hurt in the least, and the form of the fourth resembleth that of a divine being. And Nebuchadnezzar approached the mouth of the burning furnace, and exclaimed with a loud voice, and said, Ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and step hither. When they were come forth, all the high officers and counsellors of the king assembled around them, and beheld with astonishment, how the flame had had no power upon the bodies of these men, for neither the hair of their heads was singed, nor were their coats disfigured, nor had the smell of fire passed on them. But Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants, who, confiding in him, transgressed the king's command, and yielded their bodies to the flames, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God; therefore I make a decree, that every one, wherever and whencesoever he be, that shall be guilty of speaking anything amiss against the God of these men, shall be cut in pieces and his house shall be converted into a dunghill; for there is no other god that, like their God, can effect such a deliverance. Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to high offices of honour, in the province of Babylon.

IV. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S MISSIVE TO ALL THE NATIONS OF HIS EMPIRE, CONTAINING HIS SECOND VISION; ITS INTERPRETATION BY DANIEL, AND THE ACCOMPLISHMENT THEREOF.

Nebuchadnezzar, the king, unto all nations, people, and languages, that dwell in all the earth, "May your prosperity be increased."

I, Nebuchadnezzar, enjoyed a happy tranquillity in my palace, and my court was flourishing, when one day I had a dream, which very much alarmed me. I sent for all my

magicians, astrologers, and soothsayers, but they could not interpret it to me. At last appeared Daniel, a man in whom dwelleth a holy divine spirit, and before him I told my dream, saying, In my bed at night, it appeared to me, as if a tree stood in the midst of the earth. The tree was of a great height, it grew and increased, till the height thereof reached unto heaven, and its branches extended to the uttermost corners of the earth. Its foliage was delightful, its fruit large, and it served as food to all living beings. The beasts of the field couched down beneath its shadow, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof. And it further appeared to me, as if a holy and powerful being descended from heaven, crying with a loud voice the following words, "Hew down the tree, cut off its branches, shake off its foliage, and scatter its fruit; let the beasts remove from under it, and the fowls from its branches. Nevertheless, ye shall spare the stump of its roots; he must, however, stay amongst the tender grass of the field, fettered in iron and brass, moistened by the dew of heaven, and partaking with the beasts of the herbs of the earth; let his heart be changed from man's,[1] and let a beast's heart be given unto him; thus shall he spend seven periods. This is decreed against him by the heavenly powers, that all living beings may know that the Most High ruleth over the dominion of man, and can bestow it on whomsoever he will, and elevate to it the basest of men." This is the vision which I, Nebuchadnezzar, have had. Tell me now, O Daniel, the interpretation thereof; thou alone art able to do it, the holy spirit of God being in thee. Then Daniel was astonished, and his thoughts appeared to trouble him for some time. At length he answered me and said, "My lord, the dream befall those that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies; for know thou, the great tree, so rich in branches and fruit, which thou hast seen, that wide-extending tree, it is *thou*, *O king*, who art great and powerful, and whose dominion extendeth to the uttermost corners of the earth. And as for the decree, which thou didst hear by the mouth of the mighty holy being, that descended from heaven, it implieth,

[1] The injunction suddenly takes a different turn (after the manner of the dream, where the visions suddenly change), discontinuing the simile of the tree, and speaking of a human being. The interpretation thus partly lies in the narration of the dream itself; Daniel completed it, and applied it to Nebuchadnezzar, foretelling him that such would be his condition.

O king, an extraordinary fate, which shall come upon my royal lord. Thou shalt be expelled from human society, and dwell with the beasts of the forest; like oxen thou shalt eat grass, and the dew of heaven shall wet thy body. Thus shall seven periods pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth over the dominion of man, and bestoweth it on whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to spare the root of the tree, it meaneth that thou shalt be reinstated in thy government, as soon as thou shalt have acknowledged the omnipotence of heaven. Wherefore, O king, may it be acceptable before thee to atone for thy sins by righteousness, and for thine iniquity by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps thou mightest then, for a long time, enjoy thy prosperity." All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar; for, at the end of twelve months, he, one day, happened to be walking by his palace, and exclaimed, Is not this the great city of Babylon which I have built, by means of my great power, for my royal residence, and for the honour of my majesty? When, lo, while the word was yet in the king's mouth, a voice was heard from heaven, saying, "To thee, Nebuchadnezzar, it is hereby announced, that dominion departeth from thee. Banished from human society, thou shalt dwell amidst the beasts of the forest, and like oxen, feed upon the herbs of the field; thus thou shalt spend seven periods, till thou acknowledge that a higher being ruleth all human dominion, and bestoweth it on whomsoever he pleaseth." And forthwith the thing was fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. Expelled from human society, he did eat grass as oxen, and his body was moistened with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.[1] "But after some time, when I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, mine understanding returned unto me. And I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured him, the Infinite, whose dominion is everlasting, and whose kingdom is from generation to generation; before whom all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nought; he, who doth according

[1] The narration of this metamorphosis serves chiefly as a warning against pride and haughtiness (which have often brought on madness), but it also holds forth a picture of that intemperance and vice, whereby man, forgetting his dignity, sinks down to the brute. This has also been taught us by the Psalmist, who says (Psalm xlix. 21), "A man in the highest dignity, not being wise (i. e. virtuous), perisheth like the dull beasts."

to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, without any one being able to stay his hand, nor to say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time, my reason completely returned unto me, and I again became possessed of the glory of my kingdom, my former honour, and majesty; nay, I was endowed with even more greatness and majesty than before. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the king of heaven, all whose doings are truth, whose ways are just, and who is able to humble those that walk in pride."

V. BELSHAZZAR'S SUDDEN FALL ANNOUNCED BY THE WONDERFUL HANDWRITING ON THE WALL.

"The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment." Job xx. 5.

Belshazzar, the king, one day made a great feast for his numerous courtiers, and vied with them in drinking wine. In his intoxication he commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his courtiers, his wives, and his concubines might drink therein. Then they brought the holy vessels of the temple, and the king and his courtiers and concubines drank in them, singing at the same time songs of praise to their idols. But in the same moment came forth fingers of a man's hand, which wrote some words on the wall opposite the chandelier. When the king saw the hand that wrote, his countenance changed, his thoughts troubled him, and his knees shook. And he cried aloud to bring in the wise men, the astrologers, and the soothsayers. They came, and the king said, Whoever shall decipher this writing, and explain to me its meaning, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and he shall be ruler over a third portion of the kingdom. But not one of them could either read the writing or explain its meaning. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and he turned pale, and his courtiers likewise were alarmed. When the queen heard of this occurrence, she went into the banquet-room, and said, O king, live for ever! let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed. There is a man in thy kingdom in whom resideth a holy divine spirit, so that thy father already nominated him chief of all the sages and sooth-

sayers, because he was found to be possessed of great knowledge and wisdom, and because he is able to interpret dreams, and to solve the most difficult problems. Now let this Daniel be called, and he will make known to thee the desired interpretation. So when Daniel appeared before the king, the king said to him, There is none among all the learned and soothsayers who can read and explain this writing to me; but of thee I have heard that thou art able to disclose secrets, and to dissolve doubts. Now, if thou canst read this writing, and explain to me its meaning, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold put about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then Daniel answered the king, and said, Let thy gifts be to thyself, or give them to others; yet will I read the writing unto the king, and make known to him its interpretation. Know, O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, government and majesty, and glory and honour, so that all nations trembled before him: whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he elevated, and whom he would he humbled. But when he became haughty, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his throne, and deprived of his glory. Banished from the society of men, his dwelling was amidst wild asses; his nourishment the grass of the field, and his body was wetted with the dew of heaven; till he knew and felt that a higher divine power ruleth human dominion, a most high God, who bestoweth government and power on whomsoever he pleaseth. And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thy heart, though thou knowest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven, having ordered the holy vessels of the temple to be brought, and having drunk therein, thou and thy courtiers and thy concubines, praising at the same time those idols that can neither see nor hear, nor have consciousness; and the true God, in whose hand thy soul is, and who commandeth all thy ways, hast thou not glorified. Therefore was the part of the hand sent from him, and this inscription made. And this is the writing that was written, *Mene*, *Mene*, *Tekel*, *Upharsin*. This is the interpretation of the words: *Mene*, God hath numbered thy reign, and finished it; *Tekel*, thou (namely, thy ways) art weighed in the balance (of justice) and art found wanting; *Parsin*, thy kingdom is taken from thee, and given to the Medes and Persians. At the command of

Belshazzar, they then clothed Daniel with scarlet, and adorned his neck with a chain of gold, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. In that same night Belshazzar was slain.[1]

VI. DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN.

"Many are the sufferings of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him from all of them." Psalm xxxiv. 20.

At the time that Darius the Mede reigned over the kingdom of Babylon, it pleased him to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty seneschals, and over them three viziers, to whom the former had to render account. Daniel was one of the three. Now this Daniel excelled all the other officers, inasmuch that there was an excellent spirit in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm. Then these seneschals and viziers envied him, and were therefore desirous of finding an occasion against him. But as Daniel was very faithful, and as he could not be charged with neglect, or any other fault, they said, We shall not find any occasion against Daniel, except we find it against him with regard to his religion. Then the seneschals and viziers assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, Long live king Darius! All the high officers of the state have agreed, that, in order to establish a royal statute, and to issue a rigorous decree, that whosoever for thirty days shall address any petition unto any god or man, except unto thee, O king, be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the edict; that it become unalterable, according to the unalterable laws of the Medes and Persians. And the king signed the edict of this prohibition. *Daniel however went, as usual, into his house,—in the upper chamber of which the windows were opened towards Jerusalem,—kneeled upon his knees three times a day, prayed to the Lord, and gave thanks unto him, as he had done heretofore.* And those men suddenly broke in upon Daniel, and found him praying unto his God. Then they reported the matter to the king, saying, Daniel, one of the captive Jews, regardeth not

[1] According to profane history, this is said to be the same night in which the city of Babylon—the Euphrates having been turned from its course—was taken by the Persians, headed by Cyrus, which event was followed by the death of Belshazzar.

thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. When the king heard this he was very much displeased, and firmly resolved to save Daniel; and he laboured till sunset to deliver him. But the men strongly urged the king, and said, Thou knowest, O king, that according to the Persian and Median laws, no decree or statute which the king hath established may be changed. Then the king commanded Daniel to be brought, and to be cast into the den of lions. But to Daniel he said, May thy God, whom thou servest continually, deliver thee. And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his nobles, that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king repaired to his palace, no table was laid for him, but he lay down fasting, and had an uneasy night. And when the morning-star had appeared, the king arose, and went in haste unto the den of lions. When he came near the den, he cried with a lamenting voice to Daniel, and said, Daniel, servant of the living God, was thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? And Daniel answered him, and said, Long live the king. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' jaws, that they could not hurt me: forasmuch as before him I was found innocent; and also against thee, O king, have I not offended. Then was the king exceedingly glad, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. And they took him up out of the den, and not the least hurt was found upon him, because he had confided in the Lord, his God. And the king commanded those men who had accused Daniel to be brought. And they were cast into the den of lions, they and all who belonged to them; and they had scarcely reached the bottom thereof when the lions seized them, and broke their bones in pieces.[1] Then king Darius wrote unto all people and nations in their languages, "May your prosperity be increased. I herewith command, that in the whole of my dominions, men shall be humble and in awe before the God of Daniel. For he is a living, everlasting God, whose sway is perfect, and whose power endureth for ever. He protecteth, rescueth, worketh signs and wonders, in heaven and on earth, he who hath

[1] "He who diggeth a pit for others, falleth himself into it; the stone rolleth back to him who hath thrown it." Prov. 26. 27.

delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." So this Daniel continued to prosper in the reign of Darius, and in that of Cyrus.[1]

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

מְגִלַּת אֶסְתֵּר

I. MORDECAI. ESTHER IS MADE QUEEN. MORDECAI SAVES THE KING.

FILIAL OBEDIENCE. UNASSUMING MANNERS.

In the days of Ahasuerus, the king of Persia and Media, who reigned over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, there lived in Shushan, the capital, a man of Jewish descent, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite, whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried from Jerusalem into (the Babylonian) captivity. This Mordecai brought up Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The maid was of a fine form, and beautiful complexion, and Mordecai, after the death of her father and mother, adopted her as his child. So it came to pass, when the king had commanded all the maidens to be gathered together unto Shushan, the royal residence, that Esther was also brought amongst them. And Esther found favour in the eyes of all who saw her. According to custom, seven maidens out of the royal palace were soon given unto her, and she was in every thing distinguished above all other maids. But she had not told either her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had charged her not to tell aught of it. And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the royal

[1] At that time also occurred, as related in the Apocrypha, the history of Bel in Babel.

palace of women (harem), to know how Esther did, and what should become of her. Now when the appointed time was arrived at which Esther had to appear before the king, it was in the seventh year of his reign, in the month of Tebeth, she was taken in to king Ahasuerus, into his royal palace. And the king loved Esther above all the other women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and declared her queen instead of Vashti.[1] Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast, and remitted the taxes of the provinces, and distributed gifts, according to his royal means. Esther, however, still concealed her descent and her people, as Mordecai had charged her, for she still obeyed his orders, as when she was under his care.[2] Mordecai had, meanwhile, been promoted to an office at the royal court. And there were two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, who were exasperated against the king, and sought to lay hand on him. Mordecai heard of this, and told it unto the queen; and she reported it to the king, in the name of Mordecai. The matter was investigated, and found to be true; therefore, the two chamberlains were hanged; and this occurrence was recorded in the annals of the king.

II. HAMAN. HIS PROJECT TO EXTERMINATE THE JEWS. LAMENTATIONS AND WAILING OF THE JEWS ON THAT ACCOUNT. ESTHER'S SYMPATHY.

"I thank thee that thou hast afflicted me, and art again become my salvation."
Psalm cxviii. 21.

After this event did king Ahasuerus promote Haman, of the family of Agag, to great dignity, and elevated him above all

[1] Who had been divested of her royalty in consequence of a previous occurrence.

[2] A noble trait in the character of our coreligionist. Although a queen, and fully able to act according to her own pleasure, she still remains a dutiful and grateful daughter to her fosterfather. Take this to heart, my young female readers, and should an earthly good fortune haply elevate you above those who formerly were your benefactors or friends, remember queen Esther, and let her be a pattern for your imitation. Gratitude is a most estimable virtue. It is, as it were, the diamond, which adorns with equal lustre the princess and the peasant.

the nobles that were about him. All the king's servants that were at court, bent the knee, and prostrated themselves before Haman, for the king had so commanded concerning him; Mordecai, only, neither bent his knee, nor did him reverence. Now when the courtiers called Haman's attention to this, he was full of wrath. He disdained, however, to lay hands on Mordecai alone, since he had been told to what people he belonged; and, therefore, sought to destroy the whole nation, even all the Jews, that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.[1] In the month of Nissan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, Haman caused lots to be cast, from one day to another, from one month to another, and the twelfth month, Adar, was drawn. He then said to the king, There is a certain people, scattered and dispersed among the people, in all the provinces of thy kingdom, who differ from all other people by the peculiarity of their laws, and who keep not the king's laws, and it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. If, therefore, it please the king, let a written decree be issued to destroy them, thereby shall I be enabled to pay ten thousand talents of silver to the managers, to bring it into the royal exchequer. The king took his signet from his hand, delivered it unto Haman, and said to him, The money is given to thee, the people also to do with them as it seemeth good unto thee. Then the royal scribes were called to write the decree; it was signed by the king, sealed with the royal seal, and sent by posts into all the king's provinces. The decree enjoined to kill and to destroy all Jews, both young and old, women and children, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and to take their spoil for a prey. This decree was also published in Shushan, the capital. The king and Haman now sat down to drink, while the city Shushan was perplexed. And in every province, whithersoever this decree of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting and weeping and wailing; sackcloth and ashes were the pillows of the great. But Mordecai, having learned what had happened, rent his garments, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and walked about the city, wailing and lamenting. Thus he came before the gates of the royal palace. And when Esther's chamberlains and her maids came and told her of this, she was

[1] Here the desire of revenge is shown in its most formidable aspect, for, being endowed with power, it knows no bounds.

exceedingly grieved, and immediately sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take off his sackcloth from him; but he refused to accept it. Then Esther deputed Hatach, a trusty servant, to inquire of Mordecai, concerning the matter. And Mordecai told him of Haman's wicked scheme against the Jews; he also gave him a copy of the royal decree, to show it unto Esther, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to pray unto him for protection and mercy, on behalf of her people. And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai. Esther, however, hereupon sent word to Mordecai, saying, It is known unto all, that whosoever, whether man or woman, approacheth the king in his inner court, without being summoned, hath, according to law, forfeited his life, unless the king should hold out to him the golden sceptre, in which case alone his life is saved; but, as for me, I have not been called to the king these thirty days. And when this reply of Esther was told unto Mordecai, he commanded to answer Esther, Think not that thou alone, of all the Jews, shalt escape the danger in the royal palace; for if thou art silent at this time, then shall enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house ye shall all be destroyed. And who knoweth, whether it was not for such a time as this that thou attainedst royal dignity?[1] Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, Go then, and gather together all the Jews unto Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day; I, also, and my maidens, will fast likewise;[2] and so will I go in unto the king, contrary to the law, and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.[3]

[1] Indeed we now clearly see, that it was alone for this, the salvation of her people. Thus, divine Providence knows how to dispose of the chain of events for the deliverance and preservation of men and of whole nations, in such a manner as man hardly dares to conceive.

[2] This gave rise to the fast of Esther, תַּעֲנִית אֶסְתֵּר, on the thirteenth day of Adar.

[3] That the pious queen required the persuasions of Mordecai, before she ventured to go to the king, is quite natural. The love of life is, and ever remains, predominant within man. Hence, her sympathy for her people could not immediately prevail over the fear of hazarding her life. Perhaps, also, she may, in the first moment, have indulged in the hope, that, as there was a whole year's respite before the fatal decree was to be carried into execution, deliverance might possibly come from some quarter, or salvation from God. But she was ready to be a sacrifice for her people, as soon as her alarmed relative urgently remonstrated with her respecting the impending danger.

III. ESTHER MAKETH SUPPLICATION BEFORE THE KING ON BEHALF OF HER PEOPLE. HAMAN'S FALL.

"The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead." Prov. xi. 8.

Now it came to pass, on the third day, that Esther had put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the palace, opposite to the chambers of the king, where the king sat on his throne. And when he saw the queen standing in the court, she obtained favour in his sight, and he held out to her the golden sceptre.[1] So Esther drew near, and touched the point of the sceptre. Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther, and what is thy request? and were it half the kingdom it shall be given thee. Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him. And the king said, Let Haman be called forthwith, that he may do as Esther hath said: so the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared. At the banquet, the king again said to Esther, What is thy petition, and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be granted thee. Then answered Esther and said, If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please thee, let the king and Haman come again to-morrow to a banquet, and I will then do as the king hath said (viz. state my request). Haman went forth that day joyful, and with a glad heart; but when he again saw how Mordecai neither stood up nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against him. And when he came home, he said to his wife and to his friends, All my wealth, my greatness, and my glory, have no value for me, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew at court. Then said Zeresh his wife, and his friends, unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to-morrow speak thou unto the king, that Mordecai may be hanged thereon, then thou canst go in merrily with the king unto the banquet. This advice pleased Haman, and he caused the gallows to be made.

On that night could not the king sleep,[2] and it was pro-

[1] As a customary token of the royal grace, which entitled the person, thus favoured, to approach and to touch the sceptre.

[2] Wonderful interference of divine providence!

posed to bring the book in which were recorded the most remarkable events of the time. And when they were read before the king, it was found written, that Mordecai had one day informed against two servants of the king, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the king said, What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? And the attendants replied, Not the least thing hath been done to him for it. Now Haman was come (namely, in the morning) to speak unto the king, to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had caused to be erected for him. So when he came in, the king asked him, What could be done unto the man to whom the king is desirous of showing especial honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, Whom would the king wish to honour more than myself? And he, therefore, answered the king, Let the royal apparel be brought, which the king wore, and the horse, that the king rode upon, when the royal crown was set upon his head. And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's principal noblemen, that he may array the man whom the king delighteth to honour, and let him lead him on horseback through the streets of the city, and proclaim before him, "Thus is it done to the man to whom the king delighteth to honour." Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, who is at my court; let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and led him on horseback through the streets of the city, and proclaimed before him, "Thus is it done to the man to whom the king delighteth to honour." Mordecai then returned to court; but Haman hasted to his house mournful, and having his head covered.[1] Soon after came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared. So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen. And when the king again said to Esther, Whatever be thy request, or thy wish, queen Esther, it shall be granted thee. Esther answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request; for we are

[1] "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. xvi. 18), may be particularly applied to Haman.

sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish; had we been sold for bondage only, I would have been silent, but the revengeful enemy doth not care even for his king's damage. And the king quickly asked, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? And Esther said, A cruel and revengeful enemy, this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen. The king arose from the banquet full of wrath, and went forth into the garden. Haman, however, stayed to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king. Now when the king returned out of the garden, Haman was fallen on the sofa on which Esther sat. Then said the king, Will he force the queen even in my own house? As this word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.[1] And Harbonah, one of the king's chamberlains, said, Behold, also, the gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman had erected for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Let him be himself hanged thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai, and thus the king's wrath was pacified.

IV. THE FESTIVAL OF PURIM. MORDECAI'S GREATNESS.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."
Psalm cxviii. 24.

Now, when Esther had told the king what Mordecai was unto her, the king sent for him, and took off his ring which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman, which the king had given her that day as a present. At the request of Esther, counter decrees were soon issued, which Mordecai caused to be written in the name of the king, and sealed with the king's seal, and which he sent by posts unto every province of the king. The contents thereof were, That the decree of Haman concerning the extermination of the Jews was quite invalid, and that the Jews were permitted to offer resistance to their enemies and assailants, and to rid themselves of them. And

[1] Thus was done to him who was in disgrace with the king, and punishment was then sure to follow.

such a decree was also given in Shushan. Mordecai now went out from the presence of the king, arrayed in royal apparel, and the city of Shushan rejoiced and triumphed. And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. Thus was the day (namely, the thirteenth day of the month of Adar) on which the enemies of the Jews had hoped to ruin them, converted into a joyful day; for they everywhere defeated their enemies, and none could withstand them. Also the condition of the Jews was everywhere improved; because the fear of Mordecai had fallen upon all the governors of the provinces, and upon all the king's officers. For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame was spread throughout the whole country, so that this man became greater and greater. The Jews in Shushan celebrated the fifteenth, but the Jews in other places the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, as a day of feasting and gladness, and of sending presents one to another. Esther the queen and Mordecai sent letters unto all the Jews in all the provinces of Ahasuerus, the king, words of peace and truth. To establish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth and the fifteenth day of the month of Adar, yearly,—as the days on which their sorrow was turned into joy, and their mourning into festivity,—and to spend them as days of feasting and joy, and of sending presents one to another,[1] and gifts to the poor.[2] And because of the lot (called *Pur*) which Haman, the persecutor of the Jews, had cast to destroy them, these days were called Purim. And the Jews took it upon themselves as an inviolable law, and upon their posterity, and upon all such as should join themselves unto them, to keep these two days according to the prescribed manner and time. And these days of Purim shall never cease among the Jews, nor their memorial perish from their posterity. And Mordecai was next unto king Ahasuerus, the greatest among his nation, obliging towards the multitude of his friends, benevolent towards his people, and benefiting all his posterity.

[1] Hence the custom still existing among us of mutually sending presents to friends and relatives (שִׁלּוֹחַ מָנוֹת).

[2] A very laudable custom. The poor and needy in the community are not to feel want on the general day of salvation and joy; but they shall be enabled, by our charity, to rejoice outwardly as well as inwardly, so that the day may be one of universal hilarity.

THE BOOKS OF EZRA AND NEHEMIAH.

סִפְרֵי עֶזְרָא וּנְחֶמְיָה

I. TERMINATION OF THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY. A PORTION OF THE JEWS RETURN UNTO JERUSALEM UNDER ZERUBBABEL, WHO RESTORETH THE WORSHIP OF GOD THERE.

"But they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they who have turned many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Daniel xii. 3.

Now in the first year of the reign of Cyrus, king of Persia, when the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah[1] was to be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and committed it also to writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and now he hath charged me to build him a temple in Jerusalem. Whoever of his people, therefore, liveth among you,—his God be with him—let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, that he may there assist in building the temple of the Lord, the God of Israel. Those Israelites, however, who shall choose to remain in their present places of habitation, let their fellow-citizens assist them with gold, with silver, and with other goods; and these presents, together with other voluntary contributions for the temple, shall be sent up to Jerusalem. Then rose up the chiefs of the families of Judah, and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God moved to go up, to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. And all their neighbours helped them with vessels of silver, with gold, with beasts, and with other precious things, besides all separate voluntary offerings. Also Cyrus, the king, gave up all the vessels of the temple of the Lord which Nebuchadnezzar had

[1] Jer. xxv. 11, where it is said, "But when the seventy years (of captivity) shall have elapsed, I will visit the king of Babylon," &c. And as for Koresh (Cyrus), the king, we find, one hundred and twenty years before this time, a prophecy concerning him in Isaiah (see Is. p. 247), where he is called the anointed of the Lord, has greatness and dominion promised him, and where also the fall of Babylon is predicted. "The counsel of the Lord endureth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." Psalm xxxiii. 11.

carried off from Jerusalem, and deposited in the temple of his idol. And the total number of the silver and gold vessels was five thousand four hundred. These were handed over to Sheshbazzar, who brought them up from Babylon unto Jerusalem. Among the leading men of Judah, who now went up to the land of Israel, *Zerubbabel* and *Jeshua* the priest were particularly distinguished. With them went up forty and two thousand and three hundred and sixty, besides their servants and their maids, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven. Two hundred male and female singers also joined them. The heads of the families, immediately after their arrival, made preparations for the erection of the temple, towards which they contributed voluntary offerings, each according to his ability. The Israelites thus returned settled in the cities. And when the seventh month (Tishri) approached, the whole nation gathered themselves together as one man in Jerusalem. Then stood up Jeshua, the priest, with his colleagues, and Zerubbabel with his brothers, and built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt-offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God. And they celebrated the feast of Tabernacles, according to precept, and offered the sacrifices as prescribed for each day.

II. COMMENCEMENT OF THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE. INTERRUPTION THEREOF. CONTINUATION OF THE BUILDING UNDER DARIUS.

In the second month of the second year of their coming into Jerusalem out of the Babylonian captivity, the foundation of the temple was laid. While the builders laid the foundation, the Levites, accompanied by trumpets and cymbals, chanted the hymns and psalms of David, in praise of the Lord. They sung, "Thank ye the Lord, and praise ye him, because he is good, for ever endureth his mercy towards Israel." And all the people shouted with a great shout. But many of the older priests and Levites, and heads of families, who had seen the first temple in its splendour, wept aloud when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin, namely, the Assyrian strangers who dwelt in the country,[1] heard of this

[1] They were called Samaritans, from Samaria, the name of the capital of the fallen kingdom of Israel. (See p. 205.)

building of the temple, they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chiefs of the families, and said, Let us build with you; for we seek your God as ye do, and sacrifice unto him, since we have been in this country. But their request having been refused, they endeavoured to disturb and to prevent the building of the temple. And in the beginning of the reign of Artaxerxes, those enemies wrote unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem; whereupon the king commanded, that the building of the city of Jerusalem and of the temple should be discontinued. Thus the work of the temple of the Lord was interrupted, until the second year of the reign of Darius, the king. For then rose up again Zerubbabel and Jeshua the priest, and resumed the building of the temple. And Haggai and Zechariah,[1] the prophets, who then prophesied unto the Jews that were in Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, assisted and supported them. And again adversaries rose up against them. But Darius, having found in the historical records how Cyrus had acted so well towards the Jews, and how he had favoured the building of the temple, immediately made a decree, that the erection of the temple should be continued without interruption. Moreover, he commanded, that the expenses of the building be forthwith given to the Jews out of the royal revenues, arising from the countries beyond the river (Euphrates), as well as the required animals for sacrifice, wheat, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests in Jerusalem; in order—such were the words of the decree—that they may offer the due sacrifices unto the God of heaven, and pray to him for the life of the king and of his posterity. And whosoever shall presume to disobey my word, let his house be made a dunghill, and let him be hanged. And the God, whose name dwelleth there (in Jerusalem), shall destroy every king and every nation that shall lay hand on his temple to destroy it, or even to damage it. I, Darius, have made this decree, let it be executed forthwith. The Israelites now continued the building of the temple. And the temple was finished in the sixth year of the reign of king Darius, in the third day of the month of Adar. And the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and all that were returned from the captivity, celebrated the dedication of the house with joy. And they offered on this occasion a hundred bullocks,

[1] Of the twelve minor prophets. (See p. 283.)

two hundred rams, and four hundred lambs; and for a sin-offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. And the priests and the Levites were appointed to their offices for the service of God, as it is written in the book of Moses. Those who were returned out of the captivity now celebrated the passover seven days with joy; for the Lord had made them joyful by having inclined the heart of the king in their favour, to render them his powerful assistance in the work of the building of the temple.

III. THE ARRIVAL OF *EZRA*, THE PRIEST, AND HIS INSTITUTIONS.

"A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth (his kind words), and the good deed of his hands shall be rendered unto him." Prov. xii. 14.

In the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, Ezra the priest went up from Babylon. This Ezra was a man greatly learned in the law of Moses, and the king granted him all his request, because it was evident that the hand of the Lord guided him. For Ezra ever had devoted himself to the study of the law of God, in order to practise it, and to teach in Israel law and judgment. Upon the first day of the first month he left Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month he arrived in Jerusalem. And there went up with him some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters. And the king handed him a decree, by virtue of which every Israelite was permitted to go up with him to Jerusalem. It also decreed, that all the expenses of the journey should be defrayed out of the royal treasury, and that all the treasurers in the land of Israel should furnish him with all that he required for the service of God, or for other purposes; and lastly, it empowered him to appoint judges and officers among his people, and duly to punish him who should transgress the laws of God, or of the king. And Ezra praised the Lord, and said, Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, who hast put it into the king's heart to beautify thy temple in Jerusalem, and who hast caused me to find grace before the king and his counsellors, and that, by the merciful protection of the Lord, I was able to take up with me many of the leading men of Israel.

Now after that Ezra was arrived in Jerusalem, and had delivered the contributions in gold, silver, and vessels intended

for the temple, those who were come out of the captivity offered up sacrifices in honour of the Lord. But when Ezra heard that many of the people of Israel had mixed with the nations of the adjacent countries, by having intermarried with them, he was much grieved. He rent his garment, sat down by himself, and fasted until evening. And when the evening sacrifice had been offered up, he arose, fell upon his knees, spread out his hands unto the Lord, and said, O my God, deeply ashamed and dejected, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our transgressions reach unto heaven. Thou hast not forsaken us in our bondage, thou hast revived us, the temple of our God is raised out of its desolation, and we again have a protecting wall in Judah and in Jerusalem. But what can we say before thee, O our God, having again forsaken thy commandments? By thy servants, the prophets, thou hast commanded us to keep ourselves distinct from the strange nations of these countries, and to abstain from their abominations; not to join in affinity with them, lest we be polluted by them. And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; we yet again did trespass thy commandments, and have intermarried with these abominable nations. Shouldst thou, therefore, be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should not be the least remnant for escape, yet thou art righteous, O Lord God of Israel; since we, who remain yet escaped, appear before thee in our trespasses, and cannot stand before thee because of this. While Ezra was thus fervently praying and weeping before the Lord, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men, and women, and children; and the people also wept very much. Then spoke one Shechaniah, and said unto Ezra, We have indeed trespassed against our God, in having taken strange wives of the people of the land; yet still there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Let us now make a covenant with our God, to put away all these wives, so that we act according to the law. Arise, for on thee dependeth the accomplishment of this object, but we also will assist thee; be of good courage, and act. Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel to swear, that they would do according to this agreement; and they swore. Hereupon Ezra convened the whole

people, represented to them their transgression, and repeated the oath. Then all the congregation answered, and said with a loud voice, So be it. As thou hast said, so must we do. And it was done as was agreed on in the assembly concerning this matter; and Ezra, together with several of the leading families, accomplished it.[1]

IV. NEHEMIAH; HIS MISSION TO JERUSALEM, AND HIS ACTS THERE.

THE words of Nehemiah, the son of Hachaliah. In the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, as I was in Shushan, the capital, Hanani, one of my friends, together with certain other men, came to me out of Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews there (who were returned thither from Babylon). And they said unto me, The Jews in the land of Israel are in great affliction: the walls of Jerusalem still lie broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire. When I heard this intelligence I sat down and wept, and fasted for some days. And I prayed before the God of heaven, and said, O Lord, God of heaven, who art so great and terrible, who keepest thy covenant, and showest mercy unto those that observe thy commandments, hearken, O Lord, to the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee on behalf of the children of Israel. We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments nor the statutes which thou commandest thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the promise thou gavest us by the mouth of thy servant Moses, saying, "But if ye return unto me, and observe my commandments, though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them thence, and will bring them unto the place which I shall choose, to let my name reside there." Behold, they are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. Let now thine ear, O Lord, be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the supplication of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name. Prosper, I pray thee, thy servant

[1] This vigorous measure—namely, the repudiating of the heathen wives—Ezra found necessary, for the purpose of completely eradicating idolatry and its concomitant vices, in order to prevent such a universal evil, and to guard against the mischief which was so pernicious to the nation.

this day, and let me find favour in the sight of this man, the king.

And one day, when I took up the wine and gave it to the king,—for I was the king's cupbearer,—and he asked me concerning my sorrowful countenance, I answered him, and said, Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? And I replied—inwardly praying to the God of heaven—If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, I wish that thou wouldst let me go unto Judah, unto the city where my fathers are interred, that I may rebuild it; that thou moreover wouldst cause letters to be given to me to the governors beyond the river, that they may furnish me with a safe conduct, and a letter unto the keeper of the king's forest, that I may obtain the needful timber. And the king granted me what I requested of him. So I departed, escorted by captains and horsemen, and arrived in Jerusalem. After having been there three days, I forthwith made preparations to rebuild the walls and the gates of Jerusalem. And the people, the rulers, and the nobles supported me, and the building was commenced. But when a certain Sanballat and other adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard this, they endeavoured to hinder us, and to disturb the workmen, that the wall should not be raised. For they came with an armed troop of Samaritans, to disperse the builders, and to make war against us. Then I employed half of my men in building, while I kept the other half under arms, so that there was a constant guard that could resist an attack. Even the builders were furnished with arms; so that they worked with one hand, and with the other they held a weapon. Thus, by the assistance of God, the wall was completed. But the people and their wives raised complaints against their wealthier Jewish brethren. They said, We have been impoverished, we have no bread for our children; our vineyards and our lands are mortgaged, because we had to pay the king's tribute; our sons and our daughters we are obliged to bring into bondage, and it is not in our power to ransom them. I was very angry when I heard this. And I rebuked the nobles and the rulers, and said unto them, We have done our utmost to ransom our Jewish brethren who were sold to the heathens, and will you now sell your brethren anew? Verily,

it is not good that ye do. Ought not this already induce you to walk in the fear of our God, that ye may escape the reproach of our heathen enemies? I likewise, and those belonging to me, have lent them money and corn, but we remit the debt. Therefore, restore ye to them also their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses, and remit likewise the other debt which they owe you in money, wine, corn, and oil. Then said they all, "We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; but we will do as thou hast said." Then I sent for the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise. Also, I shook my garment off my arm, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his fortune, and thus let him be stripped that performeth not this promise. And all the congregation exclaimed, Amen, and praised the Lord. And the people did according to this promise.

V. MEETING OF THE PEOPLE. THE READING OF THE LAW BY EZRA. THE FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES. GENERAL PENITENCE. RENEWED COVENANT.

"Righteousness exalteth a people, but sin is the reproach of nations."
Prov. xiv. 34.

And it came to pass on the first day of the seventh month[1] that the people assembled, and requested Ezra, the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra, the priest, brought the law before the congregation, both men and women, that could understand its contents. And he stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose, and beside him, on his right and on his left hand, stood other men learned in the law. Ezra now opened the book in the sight of all the people, and when he opened it all the people stood up. And Ezra blessed the Lord, and all the people answered, with uplifted hands, Amen, Amen. He then read in the book of the law, before the men and the women, and those that could understand its contents, from early in the morning until mid-day. And the scribes and the Levites interpreted and explained that which was read, rendering it intelligible to the people. But when

[1] The day of sounding the cornet (see Leviticus, p. 76); also the New Year's day.

Ezra and Nehemiah, as well as the priests and the scribes, saw the people weep—for they wept when they heard the words of the law[1]—they said unto the people, This day is holy unto the Lord your God. Therefore, mourn not, nor weep; but go your way, eat well and drink well, and bestow a portion upon them for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is sanctified unto the Lord. Mourn ye not, and your joy in God shall strengthen you. And all the people went their way, to eat and to drink, to give charity to the poor, and to enjoy themselves. The following day the priests and the Levites, and the heads of families, again came to Ezra, to consult him on the words of the law. And when they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in tabernacles in the feast of the seventh month, they caused a proclamation to be made in Jerusalem, and in all their cities, saying, "Go forth unto the mountains, and fetch leaves and branches of the olive-tree, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, to make tabernacles, as it is written." So the people went forth and brought them, and made themselves tabernacles, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the streets, and dwelt in them; and there was great gladness. The book of the law of God was also daily read, from the first day unto the seventh. Thus they kept the feast of tabernacles seven days, and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner prescribed.

Now, in the twenty-fourth day of this month, the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackcloth and earth upon them. And they stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. At the same time the book of the law of God was read unto them one-fourth part of the day, and another fourth part they confessed their sins, and worshipped the Lord their God. Then some of the Levites ascended the stairs of the Levites, and prayed unto the Lord. They cried with a loud voice, and said, Arise, and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever. Blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, O Lord, even thou alone, hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens with all their host, the earth and all that is therein,

[1] In consequence of their conscience accusing them of having so often transgressed that law, and offended the Lord.

the seas and all that they contain, and thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worship thee. Thou, O Lord, art the God who didst choose Abraham, and broughtest him forth out of Ur Chasdem; thou foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of Canaan unto his posterity as an inheritance. Thou hast performed thy words, for thou art righteous. With signs and wonders thou broughtest forth our ancestors out of Egypt; thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst thereof on the dry land, and their persecutors thou castest into the deep, as a stone into the mighty waters. Moreover, thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire. Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spokest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments. Thou madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts and laws through Moses, thy servant. Thou causedst bread to rain down for them in the desert, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock. And thou badest them go and take possession of the land, which thou hadst sworn to give them. But they acted wantonly, were stubborn, and hearkened not to thy commandments. Yet, thou didst not forsake them, according to thy great compassion; and their children went in and took possession of the good and extensive land, of houses full of all goods, of wells dug out, of vineyards, olive-yards, and fruit trees in abundance. Then they enjoyed superfluity, and became fat and voluptuous, by thy great goodness. And they became disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and committed much wickedness. Therefore, thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies. And in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies, thou didst send them liberators, who delivered them out of the power of their enemies. But after they had rest, they again did evil before thee: therefore leftest thou them again in the hand of their enemies. Yet when they returned and called upon thee, thou heardest them from heaven, and many times didst thou deliver them, according to thy mercies. Thus thy compassion hath continually been extended to them, in that thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God. Now, therefore, our

God, the great, the mighty, and terrible God, who keepest the covenant and art all merciful, let not all the trouble seem little before thee that hath come upon us, on our kings, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day. Howbeit, thou art just in all that is come upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly. We, indeed, inhabit the good and fertile land which thou gavest to our ancestors, but we are dependent, and subject to foreign kings, who exercise arbitrary dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle; and, as yet, we are still in great distress.

Then the nobles, the priests, and the Levites made a covenant, wrote it down, and signed it on behalf of themselves and of all the people. By it they bound themselves to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses, the servant of God, and carefully to observe and do all the commandments of God, our Lord, and his judgments, and his statutes; not to intermarry with the natives of the country; not to buy on the sabbath, or on any holiday, of the strangers, who were in the habit of bringing goods to market on those days; to leave the produce of the seventh year, and not to exact any debt; lastly, to offer the annual first-fruits, duly to provide for the priests and Levites, and moreover, to preserve the temple of God in the best condition.

VI. DEDICATION OF THE WALL OF JERUSALEM. NEHEMIAH'S FURTHER ACTS.

When the wall around Jerusalem was completed, the Levites were summoned out of all their places of habitation, to come to Jerusalem, and to celebrate the feast of dedication. And the Levites and singers came to Jerusalem, and the feast was celebrated with gladness, with thanksgiving, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps. Also, that day they offered a multitude of sacrifices, and all men, women, and children rejoiced, God having granted them this great joy; so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off. On that day the book of Moses was also read in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that the Ammonites and Moabites should not be admitted into the congregation of the Lord. Now when they had heard that law, they removed from Israel all strangers.

In those days, I saw (these are the words of Nehemiah) in Judah, some[1] treading wine-presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, as also grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath-day. I warned them. Then I even saw them salt victuals on the sabbath-day; for there dwelt in the city men of Tyre, who brought fish and other articles, and sold them on the sabbath, unto the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. Then I severely rebuked the nobles of Judah, and said to them, What evil thing is this that ye do, thus to profane the sabbath-day? Thus did your fathers, and therefore the Lord did bring evil upon us and upon this city; and will ye yet provoke his wrath still more against Israel, by such a profanation of the sabbath? I also commanded, that on the eve of the sabbath, the gates of Jerusalem should be shut, as soon as the shade should begin to lengthen, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath; and some of my servants I set at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath-day. Now it happened, that merchants and sellers of all kind of ware, took up their stand, once or twice, close to the wall of Jerusalem. I admonished them, and said unto them, Why do ye take up your stand so near the wall? if ye do so again, I will use force against you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath. And I commanded the Levites, that they should come and keep watch at the gates, in order that the sabbath-day be properly sanctified. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and be my protection, according to the greatness of thy mercy.

[1] It is sufficiently obvious from this account, how anxious the pious restorer, Nehemiah, was to see the fourth commandment strictly observed. May his co-religionists of the present time take this to heart, and strive to imitate him, and to act in his spirit.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.[1]

סֵפֶר תְּהִלִּים

PSALM I.

FELICITY OF THE PIOUS; UNHAPPINESS OF THE UNGODLY.

Blessed is the man who walketh not astray
In wicked counsel, nor in sinners' way;
Nor sits with scorners; but whose whole delight
Is God's pure law—its study, day and night.
Like to the tree, the river's bank that bears,
In proper season, whose rich fruit appears,
His leaf shall wither not; but every plan
Shall ever prosper *with the godly man;*
Not so the wicked, *who to virtue blind,*
Like chaff, are driven on before the wind:
Therefore, the bad do not in judgment stand,
Nor sinners come within the righteous band;
For God of righteous men doth know the way,
While they shall perish who do walk astray.

PSALM VIII.

THE GREATNESS AND MAJESTY OF GOD. MAN THE NOBLEST CREATURE ON EARTH.

Thy name, how excellent, O Lord,
To earth's extremest ends;
Above the heaven's archway broad,
Thy majesty extends.
By infants' mouth and sucklings' tongue,
Thy strength, because of foes, is sung;

[1] Composed by king David and other inspired poets. The term Psalms is derived from the Greek word ψαλτηριον (Psalterion), signifying a musical instrument, which was used as an accompaniment to singing.

That thou, thine enemies might still,
And curb th' avenger to thy will.
When I the heavens thy work behold,
The moon, the stars, thou madest of old,
I ask, why thou rememb'rest man,
And what is he that thou shouldst scan?
Below the angels, one degree,
Thou hast ordained his place to be;
With glory and with honour crown'd,
Thou bad'st him rule o'er all around:
To him submission all must yield,
The fowl of air, the beast of field,
The sheep, the ox, the fish that swim,
All dominion owe to him.
Oh, Lord, to earth's extremest ends,
Thy name, most excellent, extends.

PSALM XV.

THE CHIEF PRECEPTS OF MORALITY.

LORD, in thy temple, who shall dwell?
Who rest upon thy holy hill?[1]
Whose life is pure, who acteth well,
Whose heart to truth is steadfast still.

He, from whose pure unsullied tongue,
No false reports, or slanders glide;
Who, to his neighbour doth no wrong,
Nor tells what charity should hide.

Who for the vile contempt still beareth,
But honoureth them, that fear the Lord;
He, who unto his own hurt sweareth,
Nor changeth his once plighted word.

He who no wealth, usurious lends,
Who doth not innocence betray;
He, who 'gainst evil thus contends,
Shall ne'er feel sorrow or dismay.

[1] That is, Who is worthy to appear before thee in prayer? Who may think himself worthy of eternal bliss?

PSALM XVI.

CONSOLATION IN GOD. IMMORTALITY. FELICITY OF THE GODLY IN THE LIFE TO COME.

PRESERVE me, O God, for in thee I put my trust.
Say unto the Lord, Thou, my Lord,
Thou art my felicity; nothing is above thee.
As to the saints that are on earth,
How exceedingly great is my delight in them!
But they multiply their woes who hasten after other things;
Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer,
Nor bear their names on my lips.
Thou, O Lord, the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup,
Thou hast chosen my lot.
My portion is fallen in pleasant places,
My heritage, also, is precious unto me.
Now I bless the Lord who hath given me counsel:
In dismal nights, or when inwardly I suffer,
I have the Lord ever present before mine eyes.
He upholdeth me, I cannot be moved;
Therefore, my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth:
Even my flesh shall rest in safety;
For thou wilt not give up my soul to the grave,
Nor suffer thy pious one to behold corruption.
Thou showest me the path of life.
In thy presence is fulness of joy;
At thy right hand,[1] felicity for evermore.

PSALM XXIII.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

THE Lord is my shepherd, nothing I shall lack;
He sendeth me to repose on verdant meadows,
And conducteth me to gently rilling brooks.
He refresheth my fainting soul,

[1] That is, after our departure from this world, when the soul shall enjoy the pure contemplation of the Deity.

And guideth me in the paths of righteousness,
For the glory of his name.
But should I even stray
Through the shadowy vale of death,
I will walk without fear, for thou art with me;
Thy rod and thy staff
Are my trust for ever.
A banquet thou preparest for me,
In sight of mine enemies:
Thou anointest my head with oil,
And fillest my goblet to the brim.
Surely joy and bliss follow me
All the days of my life;
And hereafter I shall dwell
In the house of the Lord for ever.

PSALM XXXVII.

THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED DOES NOT ENDURE; BUT LASTING SALVATION AWAITETH THE GODLY.

1 Be not jealous of the prosperity of the wicked;
Envy not the workers of iniquity:
They shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.
2 Trust in the Lord, and do good;
Abide in the land, and maintain honesty;
So shalt thou delight in the Lord,
And he shall bestow what thy heart desireth.
3 Commit thy way unto the Lord;
Trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass.
He bringeth forth thy righteousness as the light,
And thine innocence as the noon-day.
4 Rest confidently in the Lord,
And wait patiently for him.
Be not jealous of the prosperous,
Who achieveth wanton deeds.
5 Better is the little that the righteous man hath,
Than the great wealth of many wicked;
For the arm of the wicked shall be broken,
But the Lord upholdeth the righteous.

6 The Lord blesseth the days of the upright:
Their inheritance endureth for ever;
Their hope deceiveth them not in the evil time:
Even in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.
7 The wicked borroweth, and repayeth not;
But the righteous is charitable, and giveth:
Such as are blessed of him, inherit the earth;
Those that are cursed of him, shall be cut off.
8 The steps of a good man are ordained by the Lord,
And he delighteth in his way;
Though he slip, he shall not fall,
For the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.
9 I was a youth, and I have grown old,
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his seed begging bread;
He is ever merciful, and lendeth,
And his children are truly blessed.
10 Depart from evil, and do good,
And thou shalt endure for ever;
For the Lord loveth justice,
And forsaketh not his saints:
They are preserved for ever,
But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.
11 The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom;
His tongue teacheth justice;
The law of his God is in his heart;
His steps shall never slide.
12 The wicked watcheth the righteous,
Eager to slay him;
Yet, the Lord will not leave him in his hand,
Nor condemn him when he is judged.
13 Trust in the Lord, observe his law,
And he shall exalt thee to inherit the land;
And thou shalt see the wicked perish.
14 Once I saw a wicked man,—he was powerful,
And throve, like an indigenous plant.
Yet he passed away, and lo, he was no more;
Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.
15 Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright:
The end of that man is peace.
But the transgressors shall be destroyed together,
The end of the wicked shall be extermination.

The Lord is the salvation of the righteous,
Their strength in adversity,
The Lord aideth them,
And delivereth them:
He delivereth them from the wicked,
And saveth them because they trust in him.

PSALM XLII.

DAVID'S ZEAL TO SERVE GOD. HE ENCOURAGES HIS SOUL TO TRUST IN GOD.

As the hart panteth after fresh springs,
So panteth my soul after thee, O God:
My soul thirsteth for God, the living God,
When shall I again come and appear before God?'
My tears have become my food by day and by night,
Since enemies daily ask me, Where now is thy God?
I pour out my soul in me, when I remember,
How I went to the house of God with a multitude,
With the voice of joy and praise, amidst the rejoicing mass.
Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted in me?
Hope thou but in God;
Him I shall yet praise,
For the help of his countenance.
My soul is cast down within me, O God,
When here I remember thee, here by the banks of Jordan,
By the mountains of Hermon, the small mountains!
Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy waterfalls,
All thy waves, all thy billows pass over me. [kindness,
Yet in the day-time the Lord commandeth his loving-
And in the night his song still is with me.
A prayer unto the God of my life:
To God, I say, My rock, Why hast thou forgotten me?
Why must I go mourning, oppressed by the enemy?
Ah, it pierceth me to the bones, when my enemies mock me,
When they incessantly ask me, Where now is thy God?
Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted within me?

Hope but in God ;
For I shall yet praise him,
Him, my God,
The salvation of my countenance.

PSALM XLIX.[1]

VANITY OF EARTHLY GOODS. IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

TO THE CHIEF MUSICIAN, A PSALM OF THE SONS OF KORAH.[2]

LISTEN to me, ye nations all,
That dwell on earth, O be attentive ;
Sons of men, sons of the great,
Ye rich and ye needy, all :
My lips shall teach you high wisdom,
And my heart indulge in sage contemplation.
My ear heareth a lofty strain,
And on the harp I disclose it to you.
Why should I be daunted in the time of ill ?
Can the punishment due to my oppressors light on me ?
They who trust in their great might,
And pride themselves on their vast riches.
The brother will not release his own brother,
But refuseth his ransom to the judges ;
Yea, to redeem himself, should it cost him much,
He ne'er would do it.
And did the fool but live for ever,
Did he never find his end ;—
But seeth he not that even the wise must die,
That the host of fools must vanish,
And unto others leave their might ?
Though inwardly they think their palaces firm,
Their residences last for ever,
As their fame, wide spread through the land.
But all the glories of man
Scarcely last one single night,
And, like the beasts, he droppeth to the ground.
Such are their works,—fools to themselves.

[1] This Psalm is recited in the house of the mourner during the seven days called שִׁבְעָה.

[2] This version is taken from the Hebrew Review, edited by the Rev. Dr. M. J. Raphall.

Ah, would posterity but burn them incense.
They sink into the grave, like the bleating herd
Death hurrieth them away,—the righteous are above them,
At dawn of yon morning. Not for ever can
The grave retain those that outlive it.
Would the Lord but redeem my soul,
When he reclaimeth it, from the pains of hell.
My soul seeth them, without envy, hoard up their treasures,
And how they magnify the splendour of their houses.
He never carrieth his treasures with him in death:
Surely his glory followeth him not.
And doth he here delight his soul?
Thou wilt be called happy hereafter,
While he goeth down unto his fathers,
And ne'er beholdeth the glorious light.
Man invested with highest dignity,
If he be not wise,
Must perish, even like the brute.

PSALM L.

SACRIFICE WITHOUT PIETY ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE LORD.

THE mighty God, the Lord hath spoken,
And called the earth, from sunrise to sunset;
From Zion—the perfection of beauty—
Emanate the rays of the Deity.
Our God cometh, and not in silence:
(Lightning consumeth before him,
And around him is a mighty storm.)
He calleth to the heavens from above,
And to the earth, to judge his people:
"Gather my saints together unto me,
Those that make a covenant with me by sacrifice.
(The heavens declare his righteousness;
For the Lord, he is judge himself.)
Hear, O my people, and I will speak;
O Israel, and I will testify against thee:
I am God, even thy God.
I will not reprove thee concerning thy sacrifices,
For thy burnt-offerings are ever before me;

I will take no bullock out of thy house,
Nor he-goat out of thy folds:
For mine are all the beasts of the forests,
And the cattle on the hills by thousands.
I know every bird of the mountains;
Whatever moveth in the field is known to me.
If I were hungry, I would not tell thee;
For mine is the earth, and the fulness thereof.
Will I eat the flesh of bulls,
Or drink the blood of goats?
Offer but thanksgiving unto God;
Perform but what thou hast vowed to the Most High,
And call upon me in the day of trouble:
I will deliver thee; thus only dost thou honour me."
But unto the wicked God saith:
"Wherefore talkest thou of my law,
Or takest my covenant in thy mouth?
Seeing thou hatest all instruction,
And castest my words behind thee:
Thou givest thy mouth to evil,
And thy tongue frameth deceit;
Thou sittest, and speakest against thy brother,
Thou slanderest thine own mother's son."
These things hast thou done.—Were I now to keep silence.
Thou mightest think I was like thee;
But I will show it thee, and put it before thine eyes.
Now consider this, ye that forget God,
Lest I tear you in pieces, and none delivereth;
Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me.
Whoso heedeth his way,
Him will I show divine salvation.

PSALM LXV.

HYMN OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING, FOR THE BLESSING OF GOD.

It is tranquillity *to the soul*, O Lord,
To praise thee in Zion,
There to pay thee the vow.
O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee cometh all flesh;

When the weight of sins oppresseth me,
Even our transgressions, thou pardonest them. [to thee,
Happy is the man whom thou choosest, and bringest nigh
That he may dwell in thy courts:
He shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house,
And with the sanctity of thy temple.
Thy threatening, O God of our salvation,
Is terrible, yet just.
Thou art the confidence of the ends of the earth,
The trust of distant coasts.
Thou who, by thy strength,
Hast laid the foundations of the mountains,
Who art girded with omnipotence,
Thou stillest the noise of the seas,
The roaring of their waves,
And the tumult of nations.
The inhabitants of distant zones
Are afraid at thy tokens;
Thou makest to rejoice
The rise of the morning and evening.
Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it,
Thou greatly enrichest it;
(Full of water is the rivulet of the Lord.)
Thou providest corn for them (men),
When thou hast thus prepared the soil;
Thou waterest the ridges thereof,
And settlest its furrows;
Thou softenest it by showers,
And blessest its produce.
Thou crownest the year with thy goodness,
And thy paths drop fatness (cause abundance).
Even the pastures in the desert drop;
The hills are girded with joy,
The pastures are clad with flocks,
The valleys also are covered with corn;
All shout for joy, all sing.

PSALM LXXXIV.

DELIGHT IN PUBLIC WORSHIP.

O Lord of hosts! thy temples bright,
How lovely are they in my sight;
Thither my soul aspiring turns,
And for their holy precincts yearns:
My heart, my flesh, have found a voice,
And in the living God rejoice.

The sparrow finds a place of rest,
The swallow builds herself a nest,
  Wherein her brood she lays:
So I unto thine altars cling,
My God, my everlasting king;
Thy blessing ever will await,
All those who dwell within thy gate,
  Thy holy name to praise.

Happy are they in thee confiding,
Thy spirit o'er their ways presiding.
What, though they pass through sorrow's vale,
Thy wells of goodness ne'er shall fail;
The genial rain shall kindly fall,
Fruitful with blessing to them all:
Thus strengthened,—every danger past,—
They reach to Zion's gates at last.

O God, unto my prayer give ear!
O Jacob's God, thy servant hear!
O God, our shield, look down with grace
And love on thine anointed's face!

One day within thy courts to dwell,
A thousand elsewhere doth excel;
Better a servant there to bide,
Than with the wicked to reside.

God is a shield, a glorious sun;
  Honour and grace dispensing still
To all, who guilt and folly shun,
  Who piously perform his will.
O Lord of hosts, benign and just,
Blessed are they in Thee who trust.

PSALM CI.

GOOD RESOLUTIONS ARE THE NOBLE GERMS OF VIRTUE. WITH SINCERITY OF HEART AND FAITHFULNESS OF LIFE ONLY, MAN IS ACCEPTABLE TO HIS MAKER, AND WITH THESE QUALITIES ONLY CAN HE ASCEND THE WAY TO PERFECTION.

I WILL sing of mercy and justice;
Unto thee, O Lord, will I sing.
I will reflect on the way to perfection,[1]
And consider how I shall live, that thou come unto me.
I will walk in innocence of heart,
Even within mine own house;
I will suffer before mine eyes
Nought that is vile.
I hate the work of them that turn aside,
It shall not cleave to me.
A froward heart I will remove from me;
I will not favour a wicked person.
Whoso secretly slandereth his friend,
Forfeiteth my good will;
Whoso hath a high look, and a proud heart,
Is insupportable to me.
Mine eye shall be upon the faithful of the land,
That they may dwell with me.
He that walketh in a perfect way,
He shall serve me;
He that worketh deceit
Shall not dwell within my house.
The man who telleth lies
Shall not securely abide in my sight.
Every morning I will drive hence
The wicked of the land;
I will banish from the city of the Lord
All evildoers.

[1] That is, the way of purification or improvement, whereby man seeks to obtain the approbation of God, and receives His aid. Like the holy psalmist, every man may and ought to reflect on his moral conduct, and study how to become perfect on earth. For this purpose we require not a crown, nor any external mark of rank or dignity; but solely a firm resolution and perseverance in carrying it out. The means for arriving at these virtues are within the reach of every man; they are, religion and reason.

PSALM CIII.

HYMN OF PRAISE TO THE LORD, THE ALL-MERCIFUL AND COMPASSIONATE.

LET my soul bless the Lord,
And all that is within me, his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget not all his benefits.
He forgiveth all thine iniquities,
And healeth all thy diseases.
He redeemeth thy life from destruction,
He crowneth thee with love and compassion.
He adorneth thy soul with immortality,
So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.
The Lord executeth righteousness,
And justice for all that are oppressed.
He made known his ways unto Moses,
His acts unto the children of Israel.
The Lord is merciful and gracious;
Slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.
He will not always chide,
Neither will he keep his anger for ever.
He dealeth not with us according to our sins,
Nor rewardeth us according to our iniquities.
For as the heaven is high above the earth,
So great is his mercy toward them that fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
So far doth he remove our transgressions from us.
Like as a father hath pity on his children,
So the Lord pitieth them that fear him:
For he knoweth our frame,
He remembereth that we are but dust.
The life of man is like grass;
He flourisheth like the flower of the field;
For let but a breath of air pass over it, and it is gone,
And the place thereof shall know it no more.
But the mercy of the Lord is everlasting
For those that fear him; his righteousness unto children's
To such as keep his covenant, [children,
And remember his commandments to do them.
The Lord hath established his throne in the heavens,
And his dominion extendeth over all.
Bless the Lord, ye his angels,

Ye mighty powers, that obey him ;
Bless the Lord, ye his hosts,
Ye ministers of his that do his pleasure ;
Bless the Lord, all his works,
In all the places of his dominion,
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

PSALM CXXXIX.

THE OMNISCIENCE AND OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.

O LORD, thou searchest, and hast known me well ;
My every thought and motion thou canst tell
Afar ; thou gird'st my path ; by thee alone
My lying down, my ways are ever known.
No word upon my thoughtless tongue can rise,
But thou, O Lord, in all its sense art wise.
Behind, before, thine hand is on me still,
In all, I bow to thine omniscient will.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
Its lofty height I cannot live and see.
O, whither from thy spirit shall I fly ?
Where go to hide from thine all-seeing eye ?
Do I ascend to heaven ? thou art there,
I see thee, do I plunge in depths my lair,
If like the dawn I fly o'er ocean's wave,
Thine hand shall lead me, and thy right hand have.
If I do veil me 'neath the shades of night,
To thee its darkness is illumined bright :
For darkness hides not from thy piercing eye,
To thee both day and night shine brilliantly.
Thou framedst my body fit to tread the earth,
Thou coveredst me long while before my birth.
O Lord, I thank thee from my inmost heart,
That I am wondrous made in every part.
Thy works, all-mighty, well my soul hath known,
My inmost bones, ere born, to thee were shown.
When I in secret lay, scarce in the germ,
Thine eyes were on me, and thou fix'dst the term
That I should live : ere I beheld a day,
Beneath thy gaze life's utmost limit lay.
Of thee, are thoughts invaluable to me,
Their number, how immense, infinitely

More than the sea-shore sand. I count in vain,
I finish, still vast multitudes remain.
When I the wicked curse, "May God destroy,"
Reject the blood-stained, who thy name employ,
Who perpetrate dark deeds, and falsely swear:
I only hate those who oppose thee dare.
I hate, O Lord, those who against thee rise,
Unboundedly, to me they're enemies.
Search me; my disposition penetrate;
Examine well the thoughts that actuate;
See if a way of woes within me bide,[1]
And to eternal bliss my pathway guide.

PSALM CLI.[2]

PSALM OF DAVID, AFTER BEING ENGAGED IN A COMBAT WITH GOLIATH THE PHILISTINE, AND HAVING SLAIN HIM.

I WAS the youngest among my brethren,
A lad in my father's house, and keeper of his flock.
My hands were skilled on the harp,
And my fingers in playing.
Who informed my lord of this?
The Lord my God, who answereth those who call upon
He sent his angel, [him.
And took me from behind my father's flock,
And anointed me with his anointing oil.
My brothers, though men of goodly appearance, and
Yet the Lord delighteth not in them. [strong,
So I went forth to meet the heathen,
And he insulted me with his false gods.
Three stones I hurled at his forehead,
And assisted by the strength of God, I laid him low.
And I cut off his head,
And thus removed the reproach from Israel.

[1] That is, an inclination to evil, the consequences of which are woe and ruin; hence the prayer, "And to eternal bliss (to virtue) my pathway guide."

[2] This Psalm being comparatively unknown, I have thought proper here to introduce it. It has been transmitted to us from ancient times, in the Greek, Syrian, Arabian, and Ethiopian languages, which four versions are to be found in the Polyglot, at the end of the book of Psalms. Solomon Plessner, from whose Hebrew version of the Apocrypha I have translated the above Psalm, assigns various reasons for its non-existence in the Hebrew, or original collection of the Psalms of David. (*Translator's note.*)

THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

מִשְׁלֵי שְׁלֹמֹה

I. MAN'S RELATION TO GOD.

THE fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; perverted minds despise wisdom and instruction.

The fear of the Lord is the source of life; it teacheth us how to escape the snares of destruction.

The fear of the Lord is induced by instruction in wisdom; modesty is followed by honour.

Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and never lean on thine own understanding.

In all thy doings regard him, and he shall direct thy paths.

My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither murmur at his correction: for whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth, even as a father correcteth the son in whom he delighteth. A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps. Every step of man is ordained by the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?

There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord alone shall stand.

He that turneth away his ear from hearing instruction, even his prayer shall be abomination.

Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues with injustice.

Let not thy heart envy the happiness of sinners, but let it ever delight in the fear of the Lord.

For surely there is a future, and thy hope shall not be cut off.

The Lord is far from the wicked; but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee, so shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Put away from thee a froward mouth (i. e. give no occasion to calumny), and perverse lips (every species of blasphemy) remove from thee.

All the ways of man seem to him free from fault; but the Lord weigheth the intention.

Guard thy heart with all vigilance,[1] for it is the source of life.

In all labour there is profit; but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.

Self-knowledge marketh the wisdom of the wise, as self-delusion showeth the foolishness of the fool.

The wise man mistrusteth himself, and escapeth evil; the fool believeth himself safe, and is misled.

Many a one imagineth he is in the right way; but in the end it leadeth to ruin.

Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what may happen to-day.

Who can confidently say, I have purified my heart, I am free from faults?

A good name is better than riches; to be beloved, is better than to possess gold and silver.

The lip of truth shall be established for ever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

Let others praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

Ever love sociability, and thou shalt have friends in adversity.

Appear but rarely in thy neighbour's house, lest he become weary of thee, and so hate thee.

The stripes of a friend are pledges of friendship; but an enemy's kisses are empty smoke.

Pride humbleth man; but the modest obtaineth honour.

He who talketh much, cannot avoid sin; but he that refraineth his lips, is wise.

[1] That is, take care to cultivate and purify thy heart, since all self-improvement, and all contentment, depend upon it.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue.

He who guardeth his mouth and his tongue, guardeth against the troubles of his soul.

A soft answer appeaseth anger; but grievous words inflame it.

Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise and happy in thy latter end.

Whoso despiseth a thing, shall one day want it; but he that feareth the commandment, shall be rewarded for it.

The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water; therefore, hurry away before the flood breaketh forth.

Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than feasts in a house full of strife.

Better is a dish of herbs, where love is (in harmony), than a stalled ox, and hatred therewith (or in discord).

Better is open reproof than an over delicate love.

III. DUTIES TOWARDS PARENTS.

My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and neglect not the precept of thy mother. They are a graceful diadem unto thy head, and a beautiful ornament about thy neck.

Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother in her old age.

Oh, how doth the father of the righteous rejoice, and how glad is he that hath begotten a wise child.

Act so, that thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and that she who bore thee shall rejoice.

He who despiseth his father or his mother, his light shall be extinguished in profound darkness.

Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression, shall ultimately become the companion of a highway robber.

The eye that mocketh at his father, and disdaineth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

The fool despiseth the instruction of the father, the wise son seeketh his admonition.

A wise son is the joy of his father; a foolish one, the sorrow of his mother.

If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink; and though thou shalt thereby heap coals of fire upon his head, yet the Lord shall reward thy deed.

He that bestoweth charity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and he shall reward him for it.

The liberal hand is blessed, for it shareth its bread with the poor.

Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall one day cry himself, but shall not be heard.

Whoso giveth to the poor shall never want; but he who averteth his eye (from wretchedness) shall have many a curse.

A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he affront thee, which would then be thine own fault.

The rich and the poor meet together (mutually assist each other); the Lord is the maker of them all.

Withhold not the gift from him who needs it, if thou hath the power to bestow it.

Say not unto thy neighbour, "Go to-day, and to-morrow come again, and I will give," when thou canst do it to-day.

Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth peaceably by thee.

Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but trust in the Lord, and he shall save thee.

Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not, and thou shalt have no need to have recourse to thy brother in the day of calamity; the neighbour that is near is better than a brother far off.

A benevolent heart thriveth, for it rejoiceth in the joy of others.

A sound heart is the life of the flesh; but envy the rottenness of the bones.

V. THE HAPPY CONSEQUENCES OF DILIGENCE, AND THE DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES OF IDLENESS.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and become wise. Behold, she hath no lord, overseer, or ruler; yet she provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the autumn.

How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise from thy sleep?

The prudent man gathereth in summer, but the slothful sleepeth in harvest.

The hand of the diligent shall bear rule, but the slothful shall be subservient.

The way of the slothful is as a hedge of thorns, but the way of the active is made plain.

He who is slothful in his work is brother to the waster.

The sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold; in harvest he seeketh, but there is nothing.

The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

The slothful man saith, There is a leopard in the road, a lion is in the streets.

I once went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding, and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

I saw it, and considered it well. I looked upon it, and took to myself this lesson:

But a little more sleep, a little slumber, a little rest with folded hands; and poverty shall surprise thee like a sudden comer, and want like an armed man.

As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed.

The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom; he is too indolent to bring it again to his mouth.

VI. CENSURE OF THE IMMODEST, AND PRAISE OF THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so fairness becometh an immodest woman.

A quarrelsome woman resembleth a constantly dropping gutter.

It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman.

House and riches are inherited from parents; but a prudent (i. e. virtuous) wife is a gift from the Lord.

A virtuous wife upholdeth the honour of the house.

A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; but a wasteful one is as rottenness in his bones. The prudence of women buildeth up the house;[1] but the careless pulleth it down with her hands.

O, how happy is he that hath found a virtuous woman! her price is far above rubies.

The heart of the husband doth safely trust in her, and gain never faileth him.

She doth him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.

She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh with a willing hand. She riseth, while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and work to the maidens. She layeth her fingers to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hand to the needy. Virtue and dignity are her clothing, and thus she cheerfully looketh forward to the future. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is gentle instruction. She looketh well to the ways of her household, that none may eat the bread of idleness. Her children thrive and prize her highly: her husband praiseth her aloud, saying, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." Gracefulness is deceitful, and beauty is transient; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall ever be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.

[1] That is, a prudent, industrious woman preserveth the house, and upholdeth its honour, while recklessness and negligence are subversive of all order and prosperity.

ECCLESIASTES, OR THE PREACHER.

קֹהֶלֶת

VANITY of vanities, saith the preacher, all is vanity. I, the preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I applied myself to seek and search out, by wisdom, concerning all things that are done under heaven. Unhappy desire, which God hath implanted in man, to occupy himself therewith. I have considered all the works that are done under the sun, and, behold, all is vanity and mere imagination. This much I perceived, that wisdom excelleth folly as far as light excelleth darkness. The wise man useth his mind's eyes, but the fool walketh in darkness.

Be careful when thou enterest the house of God. To approach, for the purpose of hearing attentively, is better than when ignorant fools offer sacrifice; for they consider not that they do evil.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and pour not out thy heart in vain words before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore, let thy prayers be few. As a dream consists of incoherent imaginations, even so the prayer of fools of unconnected words.

If thou hast vowed a vow unto God, defer not to perform it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: perform that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow at all, than that thou shouldst vow and not perform. Suffer not thine own mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; say not afterwards to the messenger (i. e. to the evil that befalleth thee), I have erred, wherefore should God be angry at thy talk, and destroy the work of thy hands?

In all thy reveries and words offend not against the reverential fear thou owest God.

The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is

common among men. A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to enjoy it, but a stranger consumeth it. This is vanity, and an evil disease. Let such a man beget a hundred children, let him live many years, and let him possess abundance all the days of his life, but if his soul do not enjoy the good, then, verily, an untimely birth is better than he: for it originateth in vanity, and departeth in darkness; let its name be covered with darkness. True, it hath not seen the sun, but neither had it any knowledge of it: its happiness is therefore greater than that of the miser; and though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he not enjoyed the good; and, lastly, do not all go to *one* place?

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of revelry; for there we see the end of men, and the living are moved to reflection.

Sorrow is often better than laughter; for even with a sad countenance the mind may be tranquil.

The heart of the wise loveth to be in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools delighteth only in the house of mirth.

It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than to listen to the song (the flattery) of fools.

The end of a thing often is better than the beginning thereof; patient perseverance better than proudness of spirit. Be therefore not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth only in the bosom of fools. Say not thou, Alas, what hath happened to me, the days of former times were better. Wisdom certainly did not dictate this complaint to you. I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that concerning which thou hast sworn by the Lord.

(Though the anger of thy ruler be upon thee), be not hasty in going out of his sight (forsake not thy post); for whatsoever pleaseth him he doth.

Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of man often presumeth to do evil. However, though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and indulgence be shown him, yet, surely I know that it shall be well with them only that fear the Lord, because they fear him. But happiness belongeth not to the wicked; in him it shall resemble the shadow, which quickly passeth, because he (the wicked) feareth not God.

Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.[1] Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart be cheerful in the days of thy youth; walk in the ways where inclination and the sight of thine eyes lead thee, but know thou, that God will call thee to account for all these things. Remove every grief from thy heart, and all anger from thy breast; for childhood and the morning dawn are equally transient. But even in the days of thy youth remember thy Creator, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.[2]

The dust shall at last return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

The conclusion, in which every thing is contained, is, Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.

For God shall judge every action according to the latent design, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים

This book, like the preceding, is the production, by divine inspiration, of king Solomon. It is also called the Praise, or Song of Love, because, that sacred emotion of the mind, love, is the subject of which it treats.

[1] That is, give charity and be obliging, without hoping for a return, and in time you may be amply repaid for it.

[2] Namely, the days of old age and repentance.

CHRONICLES.

דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים

THEY consist of two books. The first contains a genealogical account of David from Adam downwards, and a portion of the history of David and of Solomon. The second contains the history of Solomon and of the kings of Judah (as related in the book of Kings), down to the Babylonian captivity, and the termination thereof, by the edict of Cyrus, the king of Persia. According to the opinion of most scholars and commentators, Ezra was the author of these Chronicles.

THE BOOK OF JOB.

סֵפֶר אִיּוֹב

I. JOB'S RICHES AND FIRST CALAMITIES.

GRATITUDE TOWARDS GOD, AND QUIET RESIGNATION TO HIS DISPENSATION.

THERE was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job. This man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she-asses, and extensive husbandry; so that this man was the richest of all the men of the east. Whenever his sons had been feasting together, Job sent to them, and had them admonished to be holy; and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings, for he said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and offended against God in their hearts. Thus

did Job at all times. One day, as the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also being amongst them, the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From the earth, which I have traversed. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not protected him, and all that belongeth to him? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thy hand, and touch all that he hath, and he will blaspheme thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth thy hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord. And there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking in their eldest brother's house: and there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them; and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away, yea, they have slain the herdsmen with the edge of the sword, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another messenger, and said, A fire of God is suddenly fallen from heaven, and hath consumed the sheep and the shepherds, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans, divided into three bands, fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and have slain the keepers with the edge of the sword, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were feasting in their eldest brother's house, and behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and shook the four corners of the house, so that it fell upon the young men and killed them, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and tore his hair from his head, and fell down upon the ground and worshipped. And said, Naked was I born, and naked shall I return to the earth; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor uttered an offensive word against God.

II. JOB'S BODILY PAIN AND PIOUS SUFFERING.

One day, when the sons of God again came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan had also come among them, the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? He answered, From the earth, which I have traversed. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil, and that he still holdeth fast his integrity? And thou wouldst move me against him, to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and see if he will not then blaspheme thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thy hand, but spare his life. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown. Job sat down among the ashes, and took a potsherd to scrape himself withal. And his wife said unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Dost thou thank God even dying? But he said unto her, thou speakest as one of the impious women. What, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? Thus, in all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Now when Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, heard of all this evil that was come upon Job, they came to see him, to condole with him and to comfort him. And when they beheld him at a distance, they scarcely recognized him. And they lifted up their voice and wept, and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven.[1] So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, without speaking a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

III. JOB'S IMPATIENCE AND LAMENTATION.

After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed the day of his birth. And thus spoke Job,

[1] According to the custom of deep mourners.

Perish the day wherein I was born,
And the night in which it was said,
There is a man-child conceived.
Let that day be darkness,
Let not God regard it from above,
Neither let a ray of the sun fall upon it.
Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it,
Let a cloud envelop it,
Let the blackness of the day terrify it.
As for that night, let darkness seize upon it,
Let it not be joined unto the days of the year,
Let it not come into the number of the months.
Lo, let that night be solitary,
Let no joyful voice be heard therein.
Let them curse it that curse the day,
Who are skilled in raising the leviathan.
Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark,
Let it hope in vain for the young day,
Nor let it see the dawning thereof.
Because it shut not up my mother's lap,
Nor hid such woe from mine eyes.
Alas, why died I not in my mother's lap?
Why did I not expire when I was born?
Why did knees receive me,
Or why the breasts that I should suck?
For now should I have lain still, and been at rest,
And slept an undisturbed sleep,
With kings and counsellors of the earth,
Who built desolate places for themselves;
Or with princes, who are rich in gold,
Who filled their houses with silver.
Or as a hidden untimely birth,
I had not been,
As infants who never saw light.
There the wicked cease from trembling,
And there the weary are at rest.
Those who were bound here rest there,
And hear no more the voice of the oppressor.
There the humble is equal to the high,
And the slave is free from his master.
Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery,
And life unto those that are bitter in soul?

Who long in vain for death,
And would fain dig it out of the depth?
Who rejoice in sepulchres,
And are glad at the sight of a grave?
Why is life given to him who seeth no outlet,
And whom God hath hedged in?
Before I eat cometh sighing,
And my lamentations are poured out like streams of water.
For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me,
And that which I was afraid of is come upon me.
I have neither safety, nor rest, nor quiet,
Nought but trouble is my lot.

IV. JOB CONTINUES TO LAMENT THE VANITY OF HUMAN LIFE AND ITS WOES.

Truly, a host of sufferings is man's on earth,
And his days are like the days of a hireling.
As a slave longeth for the shadow,
And as a hireling looketh for his reward,
So am I made to possess evil months,
And wearisome nights are appointed to me.
When I lie down, I say,
When shall I arise,
And the night be gone?
I am full of anxious dreams
Unto the dawning of the day.
My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust,
My skin is burst with boils.
My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,
And are spent in vain hope.
O remember that my life is a breath:
Mine eye shall never again see happiness on earth.
No eye shall then see me any more;
Even thy looks find me no more.
As the cloud disappeareth and vanisheth,
So man descendeth into the grave,
And returneth thence no more;
He shall no more come up,
No more return to his house,
Neither shall his dwelling-place see him any more.
Therefore, I will not refrain my mouth,
I will freely speak in the anguish of my spirit,

And freely complain of my bitter woes.
Am I a sea, or a furious monster,
That thou settest a watch round about me?
When I say my bed shall comfort me,
My couch shall ease my complaint,
Then thou scarest me with dreams,
And terrifiest me through visions,
So that I would fain deprive myself of life,
And wish for death for these bones.
Yet that I disdain;
I know I shall not live for ever.
But, therefore, desist from me,
For, lo, my days are vanity.
What is man, that thou shouldst deem him great,
And that thou shouldst even notice him?
That thou shouldst visit him every morning,
And try him every moment?
How long wilt thou not depart from me,
Nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?
If I have sinned, what have I thereby done unto thee?
O thou preserver of men, why hast thou set me as a mark
So that I am a burden to myself? [against thee,
And why dost thou not pardon my transgression,
And take away mine iniquity?
For soon shall I sleep in the dust:
Thou shalt then seek me, but thou shalt find me no more.

V. JOB'S FRIENDS OPPOSE HIS ARGUMENTS, AND HE REPEATEDLY ANSWERS THEM. AT LENGTH GOD HIMSELF SPEAKS TO HIM, AND HE ANSWERS HIM.

The dispensations of the Lord are inscrutable to mortal eye; it behoves not man to attempt to judge of them according to his selfish notions, or even to find fault with them; every thing is the work of his wisdom, all is subordinate to a beneficent and wise end.

And the three friends of Job answered him, each according to his own manner and understanding, endeavouring to refute his arguments, and to comfort him in his sufferings. But Job replied to them in a manner that they could not controvert him. A certain Elihu also joined them, attempting to contradict Job, and to bring him over to his opinion. At length, the Lord himself spoke to Job out of a whirlwind, and said,

Who is this that thus traduceth my counsel,
By words without knowledge?
Gird up now thy loins like a man,
For I will demand of thee, and answer thou me,
Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Declare, if thou art so full of understanding.
Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest?
Or who hath stretched the line upon it?
Whereupon rest its pillars?
Or who laid the corner-stone thereof?
When the morning-stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy,
Who hemmed in the sea,
When it broke forth out of the depth?
I wrapt it in clouds,
And enveloped it with a thick mist.
I imposed laws on it,
And set bars and doors to it, saying,
Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further,
And here shall thy proud waves be stayed.
Hast thou ever commanded the morning,
And assigned a place to the morning-star,
That it might shed its rays upon the borders of the earth,
That the wicked might be shaken out of it? [seal,[1]
The form of things is changed, as if by the impression of a
And suddenly they appear, as if newly adorned.
But from the wicked their light is withholden,
And their proud arm shall be broken.
Hast thou dived into the sea?
Or hast thou searched its depth?
Have the gates of death ever been opened unto thee,
The gates where corruption abideth?
Hast thou perceived the circumference of the earth?
Declare if thou knowest it all.
Where is the way where light dwelleth?
And as for darkness, where is its place,
That thou shouldst reach the bounds thereof,
And find the path to its dwelling?
Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born,
Or because the number of thy days is great?

[1] At daybreak; and to this, too, the succeeding verse alludes.

Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?
Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,
Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,
Against the day of battle and war?
By what way is the light parted?
How is the east wind carried over the earth?
Who cutteth out channels for the overflowing of waters?
Or who traceth a path for the lightning?
To cause it to rain on uninhabited land,
On the wilderness, where there is no man?
To water the desolate ground,
And to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?
Hath the rain a father;
Or who hath begotten the drops of the dew?
Out of whose womb came the ice?
And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath engendered it?
The waters are hid as with a stone,
And the face of the deep is frozen.
Canst thou bind the brilliant Pleiades,
Or loose the bands of Orion?
Canst thou guide the planets in their orbs,
And in their seasons?
Or canst thou point out the way to Arcturus, with his sons?
Knowest thou the laws of heaven?
Canst thou set the dominion thereof on the earth?
Canst thou bid the clouds that it cover thee with water?
Canst thou send forth lightnings,
That they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?
Who hath put wisdom into the heart of man;
Or who hath given understanding to his mind?
Whose wisdom hath ever numbered the clouds;
Or who can make them descend in gentle showers,
That the dust grow hard,
And the clods cleave fast together?
Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lioness;
Or satisfy her cubs,
When they couch in their dens,
And lurk in the covert for their prey?
Who provideth food for the raven,
When his young ones cry unto God, and wander for lack of meat?

VI. JOB ACKNOWLEDGES, WITH HUMILITY, THE WISDOM AND OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD; THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD IS INSCRUTABLE; MAN'S INSIGNIFICANCE AND LIMITED JUDGMENT. BENEFICENT COMPENSATION FOR JOB'S SUFFERINGS, AND HIS HAPPY END.

THEN Job answered the Lord and said,

Indeed, I now know that thou canst do every thing,
And that no thought can be withholden from thee.
Who is he that dareth to censure thy counsel,
Without knowledge?
Therefore have I uttered what I understood not;
Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.
Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak;
I will demand of thee, and inform thou me.
Formerly I only heard of thee by the ear;
But now that mine eye seeth thee,
I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not judged of me rightly, as my servant Job hath. Therefore, take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering, and my servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept; lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. So the three friends went and did as the Lord had commanded them. And the Lord accepted Job's intercession on their behalf; therefore, because Job had prayed for his friends, the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all his former acquaintances, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him, and every man gave him a piece of money, and a golden nose-ring. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen

thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. After this, lived Job a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations, and died at last, being old and full of days.

APPENDIX.

THESE then are, in a condensed abstract, the four and twenty books of the covenant of our faith—of the covenant of the faith of Israel. These four and twenty books are all written in the Hebrew language and characters, in the holy language of our fathers, such as it was once spoken and written in the land of Israel. They are called holy books, because in them pious men, selected by God, have inscribed for the benefit of all generations, how the Lord disposed the events of the times, and revealed his holy will to pious and chosen men, that they should make it known to mankind for their instruction and guidance; therefore these writings are also called the word of God. According to the customary practice of our sages, these books are divided into three parts, which are severally designated

תּוֹרָה נְבִיאִים כְּתוּבִים

THE FIRST PART,

תּוֹרָה THE LAW.

ALSO called תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה (the Law of Moses) contains the *Five Books of Moses.* And that the word of God should at all times be heard in the congregation, it has ever been the law and practice in Israel, to read, every sabbath, in all assemblies for divine worship, a portion (called סִדְרָה or פָּרָשָׁה) of these five books, inscribed for that purpose on a roll of parchment: for these books contain the divine testimony of our descent, the principles and ordinances of our faith, and those precepts of virtue and justice, according to which man should live, in order to attain happiness. For this reason, these five books have been divided into fifty-four such portions, פָּרָשִׁיּוֹת, according to the number of sabbaths in the year; but also on the festivals of the Lord, we read in them, in the synagogue, each time, a portion suitable for the occasion, and according to law.

THE SECOND PART,

נְבִיאִים Prophets.

Contains the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve (minor) prophets. In the time of the second temple, when Israel was subject to the Syrian sway, and the tyrannical king Antiochus Epiphanes,[1] issued a prohibition, that the books of Moses should no more be read in the congregations of Israel, with a view to confound the Jewish religion with the Syrian heathenism, the heads of the synagogues ordained also to be read every sabbath, out of these eight books of the prophets, a portion, similar in its contents to the Sedrah for the sabbath, in order that the holy precepts of the law should ever be preserved in vivid recollection within the minds of all Israelites.[2] This portion out of the prophets is called הַפְטָרָה, which means, acquitting of any duty, because thereby they acquitted themselves, or discharged their duty, to read in the law of Moses. Since the cessation of the said tyrannical prohibition, the portions selected from the prophets, for הַפְטָרוֹת, have, on account of their instructive and edifying contents, continued to this day to be recited on sabbaths and festivals.

THE THIRD PART, (HOLY) WRITINGS,

כְּתוּבִים Hagiographa,

Contains the following eleven books, Ruth, the Song of Solomon, the Preacher, the Lamentations of Jeremiah, Esther, the Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon, Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah, Job, and the Chronicles. Of these we read, as portions of divine service, the Song of Solomon, on Passover; Ruth, on the feast of weeks; the Lamentations of Jeremiah, on the fast,

[1] See below the books of the Maccabees.

[2] According to the consolatory prediction of the prophet Isaiah (lix. 21), "As for me, behold, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, *shall never depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy children*, and their latest posterity: thus saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."

in commemoration of the destruction of Jerusalem (ninth of Ab); the Preacher, on the festival of tabernacles; and Esther, on Purim. A great part of the Psalms is incorporated with our daily prayers, as also smaller portions of the books of Daniel, Ezra, and Chronicles. Many verses from the Proverbs of Solomon, Job, as well as from all the books of holy Writ generally, occur in our prayers and other religious books.

Of the Apocryphal books, also, several are mentioned in our prayers and books treating on our religion. Thus, the Talmud quotes several verses from the book of Sirach; the history contained in the book of Judith is mentioned in a prayer, said on the sabbath, before the feast of dedication; and the books of Maccabees relate the full particulars which gave rise to the latter festival.

Thus the whole of the twenty-four sacred books are extant, to serve Israel for their constant instruction, for divine worship, and for the edification of all readers; they are extant, as a precious heritage from our forefathers, to the posterity of Abraham, and *given* by God, the kind father of all, to his children, mankind, for the salvation of the soul, and for the happiness of life; and by virtue of their divine strength, they have been wonderfully preserved, from the highest antiquity, through all the storms and vicissitudes of time. And now, my young friends, when you shall have read in this book the abridged contents of the sacred scriptures, read and study them completely in the Bible itself, the proper book of God, in order that you may become versed in them, and that they may be impressed in your heart and mind to act according to the precepts contained in them. Then you shall be happy in this life, and attain salvation in the life to come.

You must know, however, that there exist, from antiquity, several similar writings, as mentioned above, which are called

THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS;

That is, uncertain or unknown books, the origin thereof being doubtful, and the authors unknown. The original language in which they have been handed down to us, is the Greek. And although they are not esteemed as equally holy and valuable with the other books of the sacred Scriptures, they yet contain much that is useful and instructive. They

consist of eight books and six fragments, i. e. such fragments as should form parts of other books of holy Writ.

THE BOOK OF JUDITH.

It came to pass in those days, that Nabuchodnozor, king of the Assyrians, made war with the king of Media, and defeated him. And he formed an alliance with several kings in his vicinity, and became very powerful and proud. But there were several nations beyond Jordan that refused to enter into an alliance with him, and treated his ambassadors with contempt; for they did not wish to be either his friends or his subjects. And thus, too, it was with the people of Israel. Nabuchodnozor was greatly exasperated by this, and swore by his royal power, that he would surely be avenged upon all those nations. And he sent out a mighty army, that devastated their cities, and made many of the inhabitants slaves. And he subdued all the nations till you come to the borders of the two seas. Even against those who were peaceably inclined, he proceeded in the same manner, and destroyed every thing. None could resist him; for his army was composed of a hundred and twenty thousand infantry, and twelve thousand archers on horseback, and the chief captain of his army was *Holofernes*, a brave and experienced warrior. Now when the children of Israel heard what Holofernes had done to the surrounding nations, and that he was approaching with so numerous an army, they were exceedingly afraid of him. And they were greatly alarmed about the holy city, lest it should be destroyed, and lest the temple of the Lord should be desecrated by the idolaters; and they also feared for their wives and children, lest they should be carried away into captivity. Then they determined to fight against the enemy, with all their might and valour. And all the people agreed to resist and defend themselves against the Assyrians, their enemies. And they prayed to the Lord, the God of their fathers, for his succour and help. The priest exhorted the people to repentance and prayer; and the high priest in Jerusalem encouraged the inhabitants, by recalling to their minds, how often the Lord had assisted Israel, and delivered them out of the hands of their enemies. When Holofernes was told that the children of Israel had determined to defend themselves, and that they had

prepared for war, he was astonished, and grew very angry. And he sent for the chiefs of the neighbouring nations, to ask them for information, respecting the people of Israel. Then Achior, the captain of the Ammonites, related to him the history of the children of Israel; how they had been defeated by other nations, whenever they had forsaken their God, and suffered themselves to be seduced to worship another god; but that they had always been victorious, so long as they had not been addicted to idolatry, and had adhered to the Lord their protector. "Inquire, therefore, my lord and governor," added Achior, "if this people have sinned against their God or not; for, if they have been faithful to their God, we shall not be able to withstand them, and shall be obliged to depart hence in disgrace." When the captains and Holofernes heard this speech, they were enraged against Achior, and wished to kill him. But Holofernes commanded that the army should forthwith break up, and march against the fortified town of *Bethulia*. "And when all shall have been slain," said he, "all the nations shall know, that Nabuchodnozor alone is lord of all the earth." As for Achior, he ordered him to be taken to Bethulia, and to be delivered into the hands of the children of Israel, saying, Achior shall perish with those concerning whom he hath thus prophesied. So they took Achior and fastened him to a tree in the vale near the city; here some of the Israelites found him and brought him unto Bethulia. Now, when the inhabitants of Bethulia heard the speech of Achior, and beheld the numerous army advance, they were greatly alarmed. And they proclaimed a general fast, fell down and worshipped God, and wept. At the same time, they did not neglect to defend themselves, as well as they could, against the besiegers. When, however, the supply of water was cut off, they were reduced to such great distress, that they were about to surrender the city. Then Ozias, the high priest, remonstrated with them, and advised them to wait at least yet five days; and if, within that space, no help should come, he would comply with their wishes, and surrender the city.

At that time, there lived in Bethulia, a widow of the name of *Judith*. She was rich, of a goodly countenance, and beautiful figure: but she always remained with her maid, in the upper story of her house, for she feared God greatly, and was very chaste; so that she enjoyed a universal reputation for piety, and none could speak ill of her. Now when she heard that the

city was to be surrendered so soon, she sent for the elders of the city, and said to them, What! will you then, according to your pleasure, fix the time and the hour for the Lord, in which he shall help you? However, he is all merciful, and will pardon you in this matter; but only let us patiently and confidently hope for his salvation. Encourage ye the inhabitants, and call to their minds, how often the Lord tried our ancestors by troubles and sufferings, and delivered them, when they remained steady in their faith, and did not murmur under the trial; therefore, let us not grow impatient in our distress, but let us acknowledge with thanks, that the Lord only chastiseth us for our bad actions' sake, and that he doth not even repay us according to our deserts; but the Lord's intention is to exhort us to amend, lest we utterly perish. Then said the high priest and the elders to her, Thy words are indeed founded in truth. Now, therefore, pray thou for us to God, that he deliver us. Then answered Judith, If then ye credit my words, pray ye also for me, that the Lord may grant me his assistance to what I am about to do: but inquire not yet what I intend doing, only entreat the Lord to render me his aid. And when these men had left, Judith went into her closet, and addressed a fervent supplication to the Lord. After this, she put on fine garments, gave her maid a bottle of wine and a cruse of oil, and filled a bag with parched corn, with lumps of figs, and with fine bread, for her provision, lest she should defile herself by forbidden food, and thus she went forth out of the city. It was in the morning. And as she went down the hill, the sentinel in the Assyrian camp asked her whence she came, and whither she was going. And Judith answered and said, I am fled from the city, and have to disclose a secret to the chief captain of your army, showing him how to take the city. And when she came before Holofernes, she found favour in his sight, and all marvelled at her beauty. He asked her and said, Wherefore art thou fled from thy people, and art come unto us? And she replied, Because our God is wroth with Israel, and is about to punish them for their sins. They are suffering hunger and thirst in the city, so that they are obliged to drink the blood of their cattle, and eat the sacred offerings, all which is prohibited by our God: for such great sins they will be severely punished. Now I am come to tell thee all this: for thou art the wisest captain, and thy fame is great, and the Lord hath sent thee to chastise nations, and

to humble them. Nevertheless, I will remain faithful to my God, and partake nothing of thy food; and if thou wilt permit, I will go forth out of the camp, morning and evening, and pray unto the Lord, according to our law, and then return. This speech pleased Holofernes, and he permitted her to do as she had spoken. And it came to pass, four days after her arrival, that Holofernes made a great banquet, to which Judith was also invited. She came to the repast, but partook only of that which her maid had prepared for her. But Holofernes was exceedingly merry and cheerful, so that he drank more than his wont, and was intoxicated. All the rest likewise were drunk. Now when the evening was come, they had all left the tent, except Holofernes, who was lying upon his bed in profound sleep. Then Judith approached his bed, and in her heart prayed to the Lord to grant her courage and strength. She then took the sword down from the wall, and cut off Holofernes' head, and put it, together with the canopy, in the bag which her maid carried with her. And now she went forth, with her maid, out of the camp. The watchmen allowed her to pass, believing she was going to worship as usual. When she came to the gate of the city, she had the elders called, and showed them the head of Holofernes. The people, with torches in their hands, assembled in the street around Judith, and all were astonished, and praised her for this deliverance. And Judith said, Thank ye the Lord, for he is kind; his mercy endureth for ever. Through me, his servant, hath he delivered Israel, the enemy having fallen by my hand. And as soon as the morning arose, the armed men of the city fell upon the camp of the Assyrians, who, seeing that their captain was dead, were so dismayed, that they fled, and were smitten before Israel: for, from other cities, also, the warriors of Israel gathered themselves together, pursued the enemy, and obtained much spoil. After this, Joacim, the high priest, came from Jerusalem to Bethulia, to see Judith, and to bless her. And Achior thenceforth joined the Israelites, and adopted their religion.

Judith now sang a song of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. And the inhabitants of Bethulia went up to Jerusalem, there to offer up thanksgiving and sacrifices unto the Lord, as they had vowed. And all the people made a feast in celebration of the victory, and that day was kept in Israel for a memorial, to be celebrated annually. Judith continued to live at Bethulia

as an honourable and pious woman. She died, being a hundred and five years old, and was buried in the grave of her husband Manasse. And the house of Israel lamented her seven days; and her possessions were distributed among the relatives of her husband.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON,

CONTAINS wise sayings and precepts on piety and virtue, chiefly intended for kings and rulers.

THE BOOK OF TOBIT.

THERE was a man in Nineveh, of the tribe of Naphtali, whose name was Tobit. He was one of those whom Shalmaneser,[1] king of Assyria, had expelled from the kingdom of Israel, that is, Samaria. This man was pious, feared the Lord, and eschewed evil. He had never followed the idols at Bethel and Dan, but had steadily adhered to the divine worship at Jerusalem. Even in captivity among the heathens, he departed not from the word of God. He assisted, wherever he could, with word and deed, and readily shared with his brethren whatever he had, and gave a tithe to the strangers, the widows, and the orphans, quite according to the law. The name of his wife was Hanna, and she was also of the tribe of Naphtali. She was virtuous and pious, like her husband. And she had a son, who was called Tobias. And they brought him up in the word of God from his infancy, so that he feared the Lord and eschewed evil, equally with his father.

A long time subsequently, Shalmaneser having died, and been succeeded by his son Sennacherib, who had been compelled to escape from the siege of Jerusalem, the Lord having slain his army,[2] this king was very wroth with the children of Israel, who lived in his country. He had many of them slain, and, under penalty of death, forbade their bodies being buried. Then Tobit rendered his brethren very beneficial assistance in their distress. He fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and, at

[1] Vide Book of Kings, page 227.
[2] Ibid. page 229.

great hazard, interred the slain and the dead. And he heeded not the warning and admonition of his friends, who said, that recently the king ordered thee to be put to death for that matter, and scarcely hast thou escaped, but thou again buriest the dead. Tobit, however, feared the Lord more than he feared the king, and he, therefore, carried the slain secretly into his house, and in the night he buried them. But Tobit happened to become blind. And he had to suffer much from his wife and from his friends. Then Tobit sighed heavily, and prayed to the Lord, because of his sufferings, "O Lord, (he said) show me mercy, and take away my spirit in peace, for it is better for me to die than to live." And one day he called his son, and said unto him, My dear son, hear my words, and impress them on thy heart. When I am dead, bury me, and honour thy mother all the days of thy life. Remember the cares and the trouble she hath undergone on thy account since thy birth; and when she is dead, bury her by me in one grave. Be mindful of the Lord our God, and beware, lest thou consent to sin. *If thou hast abundance, give alms accordingly; if thou have but a little, be not afraid to give according to that little. Do to another as thou wouldst be done by.* At all times, ask counsel of those that are wise. Know also, my son, that I once lent to Gabael, at Rages in Media, ten talents of silver, for which he gave me his handwriting. To him thou shalt go to have the money returned. Tobias then answered and said, Father, I will do all the things which thou hast commanded me; but I know not the man, nor do I know my way thither. Then said his father, Go, and seek thee a man who may go with thee for wages; and when thou shalt show the handwriting to the man, he will credit thee. Hereupon, young Tobias went out, and found a beautiful youth who was ready to travel. He was an angel in the form of a man.[1] Tobias accosted him, and asked him whence he came, and whether he knew the way to Rages in Media? The angel said, I know the way well, for I have already lodged with our brother Gabael, in the city of Rages. Tobias went and told this to his father. And the father sent for the youth, spoke to him, and it pleased him that he was ready to travel with his son. And the angel said, I will bring thy son thither and back in safety. Then Tobit said, Go, then,

[1] "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and he delivereth them." Psalm xxxiv. 7.

and may God be with you on the journey, and may his angel accompany you. And the young Tobias blessed his father and his mother, and so departed with his companion. But his mother began to weep, and said to Tobit, Now thou hast sent away the comfort of our old age. I wish the money had never been, we should have been contented with our poverty, and it would be a great fortune if our son had stayed with us. Then said Tobit to her, Weep not, our son shall return in safety. God will protect him, and his journey shall be prosperous, so that we shall see him again in joy. Then she made an end of weeping.

And as they went on their journey, they came to a river. And when the young man went down to bathe in it, behold, a fish leaped out of the river, and laid hold of him. Then Tobias was frightened, and exclaimed, O Lord, it will devour me. But the angel said, Seize the fish by its fins, and draw it to land, and cut it asunder, that we may take with us some pieces thereof for food; and take also the gall, for it is good to anoint a man that hath whiteness in his eyes, and he shall be healed. And Tobias did so. Then they proceeded on their journey, and came to a place where there lived a relative of Tobias, by the name of Raguel. They stopped at his house, and he received them with great joy. The name of his wife was Anna, and they had an only daughter, whose name was Sarah. The latter had already been married to seven successive husbands, who died, however, each one, in the first night after the wedding. Both she and her parents, therefore, were deeply afflicted. Now, when they heard that Tobias was a near relation of theirs, they were still more rejoiced, so that they wept for joy. And Raguel ordered a meal to be prepared for his guests. But when they were going to sit down to table, Tobias said (for so the angel had previously bidden him), I will neither eat nor drink, unless thou shalt first grant my request, which is, that thou wilt give me thy daughter Sarah for a wife. At the persuasions of the angel, Raguel consented, saying to his daughter and to Tobias, The God of our fathers be with you, and pour out his abundant blessing upon you. And they blessed God, and took their meal. And when in the morning Raguel saw that Tobias was still alive, he rejoiced very much, and praised the Lord. And he ordered his wife to prepare another meal, and to provide them with all that was necessary for the journey. And he had oxen and sheep killed,

and invited all his neighbours and his friends to the feast. And he kept the wedding feast fourteen days; for Raguel had said unto Tobias by an oath, that he should not depart till the fourteen days of the marriage were expired, and then he should take the half of his goods, and go in safety to his father, and should have the rest when he (Raguel) and his wife were dead. Then Tobias called Raphael, and said unto him, Brother Azarias (for so he called his companion), pray go thou for me with the handwriting to Rages of Medea, to Gabael, and let him give you the money, and beg of him to come with thee to the wedding. So the angel took with him four of the servants of Raguel and two camels, and went to Rages; he found Gabael, received the money, and Gabael accompanied him back to the wedding. When they had arrived there, Gabael said to Tobias, May the God of Israel bless thee, for thou art the son of a pious and just man, who feareth the Lord, and is charitable to the poor. Blessed be thy wife and thy parents; and when they all had said Amen, they took a repast in joy, and in the fear of the Lord. When the second week was expired, Raguel said unto his son-in-law Tobias, Stay with us, and I will send a messenger to thy father, apprising him of thy well being. But Tobias said, I know that my father and mother are now counting the days and the hours, and are uneasy on my account. And indeed his parents were alarmed about him, his return being so long delayed. When Tobias, therefore, refused to tarry any longer, he gave him the half of his goods, of man-servants and maid-servants, of money and cattle, blessed him, and sent him away with Sarah. And the parents took their daughter Sarah, and kissed her, and exhorted her *to honour her husband's parents equally with her own, and to conduct herself as an industrious and chaste housewife.* So they departed together. When they had come near unto Nineveh, Raphael (the angel) said, Tobias, it would be better for us to haste before thy wife, and to let Sarah follow us gently with the servants, and with the cattle. Thou knowest how thou didst leave thy father. Take, therefore, the gall of the fish with thee also. Tobias did so, and they went on before the others. Now Anna sat looking about towards the way for her son. And when she espied him coming, she ran and told it to her husband, saying, Behold, thy son cometh. And the angel said to Tobias, As soon as thou shalt arrive, pray unto the Lord, and take of the gall of the fish, and anoint thy

father's eyes therewith, and he shall see again. Now, when they were arrived, and the first joy of meeting was subsided, Tobias, having praised the Lord, took of the gall and anointed his father's eyes therewith. After the lapse of half an hour, the thin film was removed from his eyes, and he could see. And all worshipped, and most fervently thanked God for the cure. Seven days later Sarah also came with all her goods, and there was great joy. And the friends and relations of Tobias came to see them, and congratulated them, and rejoiced with them. After this Tobit lived yet forty-two years, and saw children's children; then he died, being a hundred and two years old, and was buried in his city. Anna, too, died at an advanced age. Soon after the mother's death, Tobias departed with his wife and children, and with all his substance, to Ecbatana, to Raguel, his father-in-law. Tobias was happy, and feared the Lord, and saw children and children's children, down to the fifth generation. And he died at Ecbatana, being ninety-nine years old, and was buried by his family. And all his descendants persevered in the right path, so that they were acceptable unto God and men.

THE BOOK OF SIRACH.

THE fear of the Lord preserveth from sin, and where it is present it turneth away wrath.

Be not a hypocrite in the sight of men, and take good heed what thou speakest.

Exalt not thyself lest thou fall, and bring dishonour upon thyself.

Woe unto him that trusteth not in God, he shall not be able to stand.

Whoso honoureth his father shall be honoured by his children, and when he prayeth he shall be heard.

Honour thy father and thy mother, both in word and deed, that thou mayest obtain their blessing.

My son, help thy father in his old age, and grudge not the trouble he giveth thee. Be indulgent towards his weaknesses, and despise him not while thou art in the vigour of youth. For to act kindly to parents shall never be forgotten, and shieldeth against the commission of sin. In the day of adversity

it shall be remembered unto thee, and thy sins shall melt away as the ice in warm weather.

My son, despise not the indigent, and suffer not the needy eyes to wait long. Reject not the supplication of the afflicted, neither turn away thy face from a poor man. Show not indulgence to thyself, and be not ashamed to confess thy faults.

Confess thy faults, though thou shouldst be disgraced by doing it. Always adhere to the pure truth.

Be quick to hear, but slow to answer. Honour and shame is in the talk of man, and his tongue (often) is his fall. Despise not any thing, be it great or small.

If thou wouldst get a friend, prove him first; and be not hasty to credit him, unless thou shalt have tried him in the time of trouble.

Nothing doth countervail a faithful friend, and his excellency is invaluable.

A pious man hath true friends; for as he is, so shall his friends be also.

Do no evil, so shall no evil come upon thee. Use not any manner of lies, for no good can result from a lie.

It is better to say *a short prayer with devotion*, than a multitude of words without sense.

Humble thy soul greatly, for the end of men is worms.

Honour thy father with all thy heart, and forget not the sorrows of thy mother at thy birth. Bestow thy goodwill on every man, and show kindness even to the dead. Let not those that weep be without comfort, and mourn with them that mourn.

Be not slow to visit the sick, for that shall make thee beloved. In whatever thou doest remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss.

Consult not with a fool, for he cannot keep counsel. (Entrust to him no secret, for he cannot keep it.)

Open not thy heart to every man, lest he requite thee with a shrewd turn.

Despise not old age, for we all expect to grow old.

Rejoice not in the death of any man, but remember that we all must die.

Pride is the beginning of sin; it inflateth the heart, and deludeth the understanding.

Despise no one because of his bad raiment, and mock not the afflicted soul.

Boast not of thy garment, and exalt not thyself when thou art honoured. *One* evil hour embittereth many. In a man's death shall his life be discovered. Judge none blessed before his death, for by his end only shall a man be known.

He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith; and he that associateth with a wicked man shall become like unto him.

Man is merciful only to his equal, but the compassion of the Lord is extended unto all his creatures.

My son, when thou practisest charity, despise not him on whom thou bestowest it, and grudge not what thou givest him.

It is better not to give at all, than to give with unkind words.

As rain assuageth the scorching heat, so are kind words that accompany a gift.

Consider before thou speak, and learn ere thou teachest.

Judge thyself before thou judgest others, and chastise thyself before thou chastisest others.

When thou hast enough, remember the time of hunger; and when thou art rich, think upon poverty and need.

The mouth must not utter all that the heart knoweth.

Talk not of thy neighbour, and trouble not thyself about his household. For whoever listeneth unto thee observeth thy words (how he ought to beware of thee), and as soon as thou hast turned thy back he despiseth thee (for thy talkativeness.)

Much talk accustometh to lying, and self-exaltation bringeth contempt.

Nothing is more disgraceful than a lie, yet it is continually in the mouth of the wicked.

The end of a liar is dishonour, he is annihilated by scorn and contempt.

An ill-behaved son is a disgrace to his father, but a (foolish) daughter prepareth his fall.

An imprudent daughter shall cause her father and mother to be despised, and whosoever looketh at her shall hate her.

Happy is the man who dwelleth with a worthy wife.

A woman, if she maintain her husband, is full of anger, impudence, and much reproach.

A wicked woman abateth courage, maketh a heavy countenance, and a wounded heart.

A good wife is a good portion; it shall be bestowed on them that fear the Lord. A virtuous woman is a double grace, and

her continent mind cannot be valued. As the rising sun in a serene morning, so shineth the beauty of a virtuous woman in the house. As the light upon the holy candlestick, so sparkleth female beauty combined with chastity. As the golden pillars are upon the socket of silver, so are the fair feet of a virtuous wife in the ordering of her house.

On entering, a man is estimated by his dress; on departing, by his conversation.

He that loveth his son, let him keep him in strict discipline, and he shall ultimately have joy of him. Instruct and occupy him constantly, lest his licentious behaviour offend thee.

Health is better than gold; a cheerful mind is above all treasures.

A well-behaved man eateth and drinketh moderately; he lieth down, and sleepeth comfortably. For sweet and sound is the sleep of the moderate man; he riseth early, and his wits are with him. Excessive eating causeth pain, and surfeiting engendereth sore disease. Intemperance shorteneth life; temperance prolongeth it. My son, study the nature of thy body (thy constitution), and abstain from what is injurious to it. Delight not in dainties, and be not greedy after savoury viands. The works of God are good, taken altogether, and every thing is created for a useful end. We must not say, This is good, and that is bad; for every thing proveth good (useful) in its (proper) time.

Consider it well in your heart; praise the Lord, and thank ye his name.

Be not ashamed to receive information of every man, and to hear the truth spoken by every body. Think no work disgraceful, much less the wages, however low. Keep an account of thy income and expenditure, and record all thy actions in a book. Whoso revealeth a secret, loseth confidence; he may seek a friend, but he shall not find one. A wound can be healed, and injurious words are forgiven; but he that discloseth secrets hath no hope left. He that beareth hatred injureth himself; whoso taketh revenge himself, God shall wreak his vengeance on him. Pardon the affront offered thee by thy neighbour, and God shall forgive thee too. A man harboureth resentment, and yet he beggeth for forgiveness from God. Remember thy end, and cease hostility; remember that thou must perish, so shalt thou not come to sin.

THE BOOK OF BARUCH

CONTAINS speeches—consisting of exhortations, consolatory addresses, and precepts—of Baruch, the son of Neriah, which he addressed from his residence in the Babylonian captivity, to his Jewish brethren in the land of Israel and Jerusalem. To this book is also appended a letter, which Jeremiah, the prophet, addressed to the Jewish people.

THE BOOKS OF THE MACCABEES.

I. THE JEWISH PEOPLE SUBJECT TO SYRIAN DOMINION. ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES. HE OPPRESSETH AND PERSECUTETH THE JEWS. THE FORTITUDE OF ELEAZAR, AND THE PIOUS HANNA WITH HER SEVEN SONS.

IT happened a long time after Ezra and Nehemiah had rebuilt the temple and the walls of Jerusalem, and had restored the worship of God to its purity, and regulated the communities in the land of Israel according to law and statute, that the country was under the supremacy of the kings of Persia, and was governed by the high priest appointed to superintend the holy service in the temple of the Lord. When matters had continued in this manner for about two centuries, there arose Alexander, a mighty king of Macedon, who made numerous conquests in the east and in the south. He also conquered the Persian empire. No man could resist him, for he was powerful and sagacious, and had a brave army. After his death his dominions were parcelled out among his generals and princes, who made themselves kings, after having waged war against each other. *Antiochus*, surnamed *Epiphanes*,[1] was a descendant of one of those princes. He was the fourth of this name of the kings of Syria, and a son of Antiochus the great, for whom he had been a hostage at Rome, whence, however, he escaped. And when he was king, and in possession of his kingdom, he conquered Egypt. After that he took a mighty army, and advanced towards Jerusalem. At that time there were wicked

[1] That is, the noble-minded; but from his silly actions he was, by way of mockery, called "Epimanes, the mad."

men in Israel, who had introduced much of the pagan manners and customs, and seduced many of the people to forsake the service of the Lord, and his law. And they broke the sacred covenant, and practised many vices, and kept not the Sabbaths and holy days. Now Antiochus was a cruel and wicked tyrant in the eyes of God and men. He came up with his priests to Jerusalem, entered into the sanctuary, stripped it of all its holy vessels and treasures, and caused a great massacre. And after two years, he again sent a captain unto Jerusalem with an army. This officer fell suddenly upon the city, and despoiled it. And he destroyed much people of Israel, and pulled down the houses and the walls of the city, and carried the women and children into captivity The sanctuary was likewise laid waste and desecrated, the altar of the Lord was defiled by idolatrous abominations, and the books of the law were torn and burnt. And Antiochus issued a decree throughout the whole of his kingdom, that all should be one people, and practise pagan rites. He also sent letters unto Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, ordering that the Israelites should adopt the worship of idols. And the holy offerings, the Sabbath, and festivals he ordered to be discontinued. And he caused altars, temples, and idols to be erected, and had sacrifices of unclean beasts offered thereon. And he ordered all those with whom the books of the covenant of the Lord were found, and all those who adhered to the law of God, to be put to death. Then there was much suffering and distress in Israel in every place, and the trial was very heavy. Many of the children of Israel consented, and sacrificed unto idols, and desecrated the Sabbath. But those who held the law of God dear, and to whom the creed of their fathers was sacred, prepared to die, or fled into the mountains.

At that time, Antiochus himself also came unto Jerusalem, to glut his impious mind on this abomination and mischief. And there was one of the principal scholars in the law, *Eleazar*, a worthy, aged man, of a very fine appearance, whose mouth they opened, that he should eat pork. But he said he would rather die than act contrary to the law; and he suffered all his torture with great patience. At the same time he reproved all those who partook of forbidden meat, contrary to the law. Wherefore, those who were ordered to force him to eat said unto him, they would bring him such meat as he might be permitted to eat; he was only to pretend it was pork taken from a sacrifice, and to eat it for the sake of pleasing the king, and that his life

might be spared. Eleazar, however, replied, Go, and cast me beneath the earth into the grave, for it would ill become mine old age that I should act the hypocrite, and make the young say, Eleazar, who now is ninety years old, hath turned a heathen, and that they should thus be misled by my hypocrisy; that would be an eternal disgrace to me. Besides, of what avail would it be to me if I were to escape human punishment, knowing that, alive or dead, I cannot escape from the hands of God? Therefore will I now die cheerfully, as it behoveth my old age, and thereby set a good example to the young, that they may cheerfully and confidently die for the sake of our beautiful and holy law. After having spoken these words, he was struck by his conductors, and brought to the torture. And before his end, he said, The Lord, from whom nought is concealed, knoweth that I could indeed have avoided this great pain; but, according to the soul, I willingly suffer all for God's sake. Thus he expired, and, in his death, hath left us an excellent example, which should admonish every man to be virtuous.

Seven brothers, together with their mother, were also taken prisoners, and severely tortured, by order of the king, that they should eat pork, which by law they were forbidden to do. Then said the eldest of them to the king, What wouldst thou know of us? We will rather die, than do anything that is contrary to the law of our fathers. Then the king was wroth, and commanded that they should cut out his tongue, chop off his hands and feet, and then roast him in a pan over the fire. And when the flames rose all round the pan, the brothers exhorted each other, and resolved with their mother fearlessly to die, and said, The Lord God shall judge, and be merciful unto us, as Moses teacheth in his song, "And he is merciful to his servants."[1] The first having expired, the second was taken and tortured, because he likewise refused to transgress the law. And being in the last extremity, he said, Thou, wicked man, dost now deprive me of this temporal existence; but the Lord of all worlds shall reawaken us, who die for the sake of the law, to an everlasting life. Hereupon the third also was taken, and done by in the same manner. And when he was dead, they likewise tortured the fourth, and made him die amidst numerous torments in the burning pan over

[1] Deuteronomy xxxii. 36.

the fire. And when he was dead, they did in the like manner by the fifth and by the sixth. But the faith and the hope which their pious mother had in God were so fervent and strong, that she not only looked with great patience on the torments and the death of all her sons, but even had the courage to console one after the other by her words, saying to them, Behold, I am your mother, and have born you; nevertheless, I have not given you either breath or life, nor have I formed the members of your body. Therefore shall he, who hath created the world and all its inhabitants, graciously restore your lives to you in the world to come, as ye now hazard and sacrifice them for the sake of his law. When Antiochus heard this, he thought she insulted him by her language. Wherefore, he took the seventh and youngest son, who was yet left, used kindly persuasion, and promised him by oath, that if he would depart from the law of his fathers, he would make him rich and a great lord. But as he refused to be prevailed on, the king sent for the mother, and urged her to persuade her son, that his life might be preserved. She pretended to do so, took the son aside, and spoke to him in her language, saying, Thou, my dear child, whom I bore nine months under my heart, and whom I nursed and brought up with great pains, have mercy on me. Look at the heavens and the earth, and at all that is therein; all this the Lord made out of nothing, and so he made us men too. Therefore, be not afraid of the executioner, but die readily like thy brothers, in order that the gracious Lord may hereafter recall thee to life, together with thy brothers, and restore you to me. And the youth answered, and said, Wherefore do ye delay? Think not that I mean to obey the tyrant in this matter, but I will keep the law which was given to our fathers by Moses. It is true we now suffer for our sins, but thou shalt not escape the judgment of the Almighty. My brothers, who have suffered torture for a short time, now await eternal life, according to the promise of God. And I, too, will, like my brothers, deliver up my body and my life for the sake of the law of my fathers, and entreat the Lord, that he may soon show mercy to his people. But as for thee, thou shalt yet be brought, by great torture and torment, to acknowledge that he alone is the true God. When the king heard this, he grew mad and infuriated, and ordered him to be tortured more cruelly than his brothers. And thus he, too, expired, placing his confidence in God. Lastly, the mother herself was put to death.

II. MATTATHIAS AND HIS SONS. THE NAME OF MACCABEE. THE POWER OF RELIGION. THE FEAST OF INAUGURATION. DEATH OF ANTIOCHUS.

"Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation that preserveth the faith may enter."
Isaiah xxvi. 2.

In those days there lived a priest in the city of Modin, whose name was Mattathias,[1] a son of John the high priest. This man had five sons, Joannan, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan. They deeply deplored the misery of Judah and Jerusalem, and mourned for the calamity of their people, and the sanctuary of the Lord. Now when the captains of Antiochus came to Modin also, in order to compel the inhabitants of the place to worship their idols, they said to Mattathias, Thou art the leading man in this city, and hast many sons and friends; therefore, go thou first, and do according to the king's command, and thou shalt be greatly honoured and rewarded by him. Then said Mattathias, Though all countries should obey Antiochus, and though every man should depart from the law of our fathers, yet will we, I and my sons and my brethren, walk in the covenant of our fathers: God forbid that we should forsake it. Hereupon, seeing a Jew offering sacrifice to an idol, he felt it deeply, and his zeal for the law was inflamed. He ran towards the Jew, and slew him, as well as the captain of Antiochus, and overturned the altar. And he cried throughout the city with a loud voice, saying, Whosoever is zealous for the law, and will maintain the covenant, let him depart with me out of the city. So he and his sons fled into the mountains, and left all their possessions. Then many that were faithful followed them, and joined themselves unto them. And Mattathias now went with them all over the country, and they pulled down the altars of idols, and reintroduced the observance of the divine laws. And they attacked their enemies, and defeated them several times. Now when the time drew near that Mattathias was to die, he said unto his sons, There is now great tyranny and persecution, and a heavy infliction is upon us. Therefore, my sons, be ye zealous for the law, and give up your lives for the covenant of our fathers. Call to remembrance what acts our fathers did in

[1] מַתִּתְיָהוּ בֶּן יוֹחָנָן.

their time, so shall ye, like them, acquire great honour, and an everlasting name. Remember such men as Abraham, Joseph, Phineas, Joshua, Caleb, David, Elijah, Ananias, Misael, Azarias, and Daniel; how zealous they were for the law, and how the Lord rewarded their fidelity, by bestowing on them honour and a great blessing. Fear not then the words of a sinful man, for his glory shall soon perish, but ye shall be exalted. Be valiant and undaunted. Your brother Simon is a man of counsel, obey him as a father; as for *Judas Maccabeus*,[1] he is mighty and strong, let him be your captain, and fight the battle of the people. Having finished speaking, he blessed them; then he died, and was gathered to his fathers. And Judas Maccabeus was a brave warrior, and he soon was at the head of a numerous force. The Lord was with him, and his fame spread throughout the whole country. And he marched out against his enemies, and defeated them several times. And although the army of Israel was much smaller than that of the heathens, the former was yet victorious, for the Lord was with them. Judas also advanced towards Jerusalem, and took the city and the temple, and called the emigrants back to their possessions. And when the enemy had been driven out, they cleansed the temple from all the abomination of idolatry, and set in order all the holy vessels, viz. the table, the candlestick, and the altar, together with all its appurtenances; and they lighted the lamps of the golden candlestick, and put incense on the altar for incense, and hung up the curtains, and laid the shewbread on the table. And on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, which is called Chislev, they rose up early in the morning, and for the first time again offered up the morning sacrifice, according to law, the sanctuary having been in the power of the enemies for five years. The offering of this sacrifice was accompanied by song, and by playing upon pipes, and harps, and cymbals. And all the people fell down upon their faces, worshipped, and praised the Lord of heaven for this deliverance. And they kept the feast of the consecration of the new altar for eight days,[2] and joyfully offered up thanks-offerings. And they adorned the temple with golden wreaths and shields. And there was great joy among the people, because of their having been freed from the

[1] The surname Maccabbee, or Mecabee, implies a title of heroism.

[2] This is the feast of inauguration, still celebrated annually by the name of חנוכה.

reproach which the heathens had thrown on them After this, Judas obtained further victories over the Syrians, and fell in one of those battles as a brave hero; and all Israel mourned for him. After his death, Jonathan was chosen captain in his stead. And Jonathan and Simon his brother ruled Israel with glory to themselves, and delivered them from all their enemies round about. And they entered into an alliance with the Romans and with the Greeks in Sparta. But it happened already, previously to the death of Judas, that the Lord punished Antiochus with a very sore disease, so that he had to suffer great pain. Then he regretted his impious life, and the great wrongs he had committed against God and man; and he called upon the Lord for mercy and forgiveness. And he died under great torments. But the house of the Maccabees (also called Hasmoneans[1]) became more and more flourishing, and increased in greatness, doing good to their people, and being a glory to all their posterity.

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[1] חַשְׁמוֹנָאִים, that is, princes, nobles.

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